NATION

Enforce GRAP-4: SC to Delhi-NCR states

≫ Page: 4 ≪

BUSINESS

Market continues to decline amid foreign fund outfl ows

≫ Page: 7 ≪

SPORTS

Ganguly backs Ashwin for Border Trophy

≫ Page: 8 ≪

www.twitter.com/EnglishSalar
www.facebook.com/EnglishSalar
www.instagram.com/dailysalarenglish
youtube.com/@dailysalardigital

SALAR

DIGITAL ENGLISH DAILY, BENGALURU

Website: salarnews.in | www.magzter.com | 19 NOVEMBER 2024 | TUESDAY | BENGALURU | 16 JUMADA I, 1446 AH | Vol 4 | Issue No 293 | Pages: 8

'Biden risking WW3 by letting Ukraine use US missiles'

MOSCOW/MANAUS, 18 NOV

Russian lawmaker said on Monday that the administration of President Joe Biden was risking World War Three by allowing Ukraine to use US-made weapons to strike deep into Russia. "These guys, Biden's administration, is trying to escalate the situation to the maximum while they still have power and are still in office," Butina told Reuters. US President Joe Biden on Sunday authorised Ukraine to use American-supplied long-range missiles to strike deeper inside Russia, easing limitations on the weapons.

>>>More on Page 6

Shah holds meeting as Manipur burns

Govt rushes in 5,000 more security personnel

NEW DELHI, 18 NOV

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Monday reviewed the prevailing security situation and deployment of troops in Manipur for the second consecutive day and directed top officials to focus on restoring peace and order there as early as possible, sources said.

Centre has decided to send an additional 50 CAPF companies comprising more than 5,000 personnel to Manipur.

This comes after the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) rushed 20 additional CAPF companies, 15 from the CRPF and five from the BSF, to the state on 12 November after violence broke out in Jiribam district and spread to other places.

Amit Shah ***PHOTO: PTI***

The situation in the north-eastern state, which has been reeling from ethnic strife since May last year, has been volatile following protests and violence after the recovery of three bodies of women and children.

Irate mobs set fire to the residences of three more BJP legislators, one of whom is a senior minister, and a Congress MLA in various districts of Imphal Valley on Saturday night even as security forces foiled an attempt by agitators to storm the ancestral residence of Chief Minister N Biren Singh.

These incidents took place even as several restrictions were imposed after people, agitated by the killing of three women and three children by militants in Jiribam district, attacked the residences of three state ministers and six MLAs earlier on Saturday.

Seeing the fragile situation, the Centre on Thursday reimposed the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act in Manipur's six police station areas, including the violence-hit Jiribam. *—PTI*

Protester killed in firing during clash

Net ban extended as mob defies curfew

IMPHAL, 18 NOV

A protester was killed in firing during a clash between security forces and a mob that was vandalising properties in Manipur's Jiribam district, police said on Monday.

Police confirmed that one person was killed in firing but said it was not immediately clear who opened fire, while eyewitnesses claimed the firing came from the direction of the security forces.

The incident took place late on Sunday night when agitators were vandalising properties at Babupara in Jiribam police station area to protest the killing of women and children abducted by militants.

Earlier on Sunday, the body of another man was found near Jiribam town and it was kept in the district hospital. Defying curfew orders, a group of people on Monday locked the front doors of several government offices in Imphal West to protest the recent killing of three women and three children in Jiribam, officials said. The Manipur government on Monday also extended the suspension of internet services by two more days till Wednesday in seven districts of the north-eastern state. The victims' families killed stormed into the office complex of the Chief Electoral Officer at Lamphelpat and locked its door with chains . *—PTI*

Charred remains of BJP leader Govindas Konthoujam's home ***PHOTO: PTI***

>>>More on Page 3

5 Naxalites killed in Chhattisgarh encounter

RAIPUR, 18 NOV

Five Naxalites killed in an encounter with security forces in Chhattisgarh's Bastar region last week were senior cadres carrying a cumulative bounty of Rs 28 lakh, a senior police official said on Monday. Police on Saturday claimed five Naxalites, including two women, were gunned down in an encounter with security personnel during a joint anti-Naxal operation in the Abhujmaad area along the Narayanpur-Kanker inter-district border. Of them, woman cadre Vanoja Micha Karam, a divisional committee member, carried a bounty of Rs 8 lakh, Kanker Superintendent of Police Indira Kalyan Elesela said. *—PTI*

Khamenei's son chosen as successor: Reports

TEHRAN, 18 NOV

Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, is in a coma, and his son, Mojtaba Khamenei, has been secretly chosen as his successor according to a report by Israeli news outlet Ynet News, citing Iran International. Mojtaba Khamenei, the 85-year-old leader's second son, was allegedly selected during a secret meeting of Iran's Assembly of Experts on 26 September. This decision reportedly followed significant pressure from Khamenei and his representatives to ensure the 60-member body agreed unanimously. *—Agencies*

>>>More on Page 6

Punjab farmers to rally towards Delhi on 6 Dec

NEW DELHI, 18 NOV

Samyukta Kisan Morcha (Non-Political) and Kisan Mazdoor Morcha on Monday declared that farmers will march towards Delhi on 6 December. This decision stems from frustration over the Indian government's prolonged silence regarding their demands, which include a legal guarantee for the Minimum Support Price (MSP) for crops. Protesting farmers have been stationed at the Shambhu and Khanauri border points between Punjab and Haryana since 13 February, when their initial 'Delhi Chalo' march was halted by security forces. *—PT*

Gangster Lawrence Bishnoi's brother held in US

NEW DELHI, 18 NOV

Anmol Bishnoi, the younger sibling of infamous gangster Lawrence Bishnoi, has been apprehended in the United States, according to NDTV. Anmol, 50, is a key suspect in several high-profile criminal cases, in-cluding the 2022 assassination of Punjabi singer Sidhu Moosewala, the recent murder of former Maha-rashtra minister Baba Siddique, and the gunfire incident outside Bollywood star Salman Khan's residence earlier this year.

The Mumbai Police's Crime Branch had initiated extradition proceedings to return Anmol to India, build-ing upon a non-bailable warrant issued by a special court in Maharashtra. His arrest follows the issuance of a Red Corner Notice by Interpol and he had previously been thought to be hiding in Canada, having fled India using a forged passport.

Anmol is also wanted by the National Investigation Agency (NIA), which has placed him on its list of most-wanted criminals and is offering a reward of Rs. 10 lakh for information leading to his capture.

The Bishnoi gang gained notoriety following Moosewala's murder and has been under scrutiny for vari-ous violent incidents, including a recent attack linked to the political landscape in India. *—Agencies*

Leopard kills woman near Bengaluru

BENGALURU, 18 NOV

A 52-year-old woman was mauled to death by a leopard near here, officials said on Monday. Kariamma had gone to cut grass at an agricultural field near her home at Kambalu, Gollarahatti, in Nelamangala taluk in Bengaluru Rural district on Sunday evening when the incident happened, they said. The field, where she was working, was adjacent to a forest which is frequented by leopards, and warnings were also issued to villagers in recent times to not venture into the vicinity. There were instances of leopard killing dogs and other strays, a senior forest officer said. When she did not return, her family members went searching for her and discovered her half-eaten body and reported it to the forest officials, he add-ed. A 30 member team of leopard task force, 30 staff and 10 officers of the forest department reached the site along with forensic experts to take samples of the hair, blood stains and footprints of the leopard in order to catch the big cat, the officer said. *—PTI*

M'RASHTRA, J'KHAND CAMPAIGNS END, POLLS AWAIT

PHOTO: PTI

MUMBAI/RANCHI, 18 NOV

The campaigning for the Maharashtra Assembly elections has officially come to a end with polling scheduled on 20 Novem-ber. A staggering 4,136 candidates are contesting for 288 seats amid a highly competitive atmosphere, characterised by shift-ing alliances and intricate caste dynamics. The ruling Mahayuti alliance led by BJP will compete against the Congress-led Ma-ha Vikas Aghadi coalition. The national leaders, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Congress leaders Rahul Gandhi and Mallikarjun Kharge, have actively campaigned for their parties, intensifying the political battleground.Similarly, the second and final phase of the Jharkhand Assembly elections is also poised for action, with 38 out of a total of 81 seats up for polling.

The results of both states will be announced on 23 November. *—PTI*

>>>More on Page 3

TARIFFS ON INDIA CAN TRIGGER TRADE WAR: US LEADER

WASHINGTON, 18 NOV

US Congressman-elect Suhas Subramanyam has said he was opposed to imposing tariffs on India as it would lead to a trade war between the two countries.

Subramanyam's comments came amid the likelihood of higher tariffs on Indian exports by the new Trump administration. "I don't support (imposing) tariffs on India. I think that would be really bad. It would lead to a trade war. And I don't think it's good for either country," Subramanyam said.

Ahead of his election as US president, Donald Trump had taken a potshot at India's tariff structure and talked about imposing reciprocal tax on countries such as China and India. With Trump set to assume charge as the US president, there is a likelihood of higher tariffs on Indian exports."There's a lot of businesses that do really great work in India and a lot of Indian companies are expanding to the US," Subramanyam said. *—PTI*

BREATHLESS

Delhi doctors warn of health risks for all

Commuters walk to their office amid low visibility due to smog as air quality remains in severe categrory in New Delhi ***PHOTO: PTI***

NEW DELHI, 18 NOV

Delhi's air quality has plummeted to alarming levels, breaching the 'severe plus' category, with the Air Quality Index (AQI) reaching a staggering 490 by Monday afternoon. Doctors are raising concerns over the health risks posed by the polluted air, warning that the toxic atmosphere affects not only vulnerable populations but also otherwise healthy individuals.

Medical professionals are advising residents to limit outdoor activities, stay hydrated, and utilise air puri-fiers fitted with HEPA filters to mitigate indoor pollution. Those with pre-existing lung or heart conditions are urged to remain vigilant and adhere to their medications.

Dr Rajat Sharma from UCMS & GTB Hospital described the dire situation, stating that wearing an N95 mask has become a necessity rather than an option, emphasising that even healthy individuals are at risk of respiratory illnesses and other complications.

Schools will remain shut in the entire National Capital Region, and GRAP 4 restrictions will remain till further orders, the Supreme Court said on Monday. *—PTI*

>>>More on Page 4

CROSSES 5L FOR 1ST TIME

Domestic air travel touches new peak

NEW DELHI, 18 NOV

Marking a new record, domestic air passenger traffic crossed five lakh for the first time in a single day on Sunday, reflecting strong travel demand amid festive and wedding seasons.

Airlines carried 5,05,412 passengers on Sunday, and the number of flight departures was at 3,173, re-vealed the latest data from the civil aviation ministry. It was the first time that domestic air passenger traffic crossed the five-lakh mark in a single day.

"Domestic travel has witnessed strong demand during the festive season. Daily flown pax crossed five lakh on 17 November... largely backed by robust festive demand and the start of the wedding season. We expect the strong demand to continue in the winter season," said Gaurav Patwari, vice president (air category) at travel portal Cleartrip.

PHOTO: PIXABAY

However, On-Time Performance (OTP) of the airlines have been impacted in recent days because of various factors. On Sunday, the OTP of IndiGo was at 74.2 per cent, followed by Alliance Air at 71 per cent and Akasa Air at 67.6 per cent. Among other airlines, SpiceJet and Air India's OTP stood at 66.1 per cent and 57.1 per cent, respectively.

In October, aviation watchdog DGCA said Indian airlines will operate 25,007 flights every week to and from 124 airports in the winter schedule that started from 27 October. *—PTI*

Global South most impacted by food fuel crisis: Modi at G20

RIO DE JANEIRO, 18 NOV

The countries of the Global South are most adversely impacted by the food, fuel and fertilizer crisis caused by global conflicts and G20 must focus on addressing it, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Monday.

In an address at a session at the G20 summit, Modi said, "Our discussions can only be successful when we keep in mind the challenges and priorities of the Global South," he added.

Modi made the remarks at the G20 session on 'Social Inclusion and the Fight Against Hunger and Poverty'.

Modi also called for reform of the institutions of global governance.

"And just as we amplified the voice of the Global South by granting permanent membership of G20 to the African Union during the New Delhi summit, we will reform institutions of global governance," he said.

PM Narendra Modi with US President Joe Biden during the G20 Summit, in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, on Monday ***PHOTO: PTI***

Modi said India supports Brazil's initiative for a 'global alliance against hunger and poverty'.

"The people-centric decisions taken at the G20 Summit in New Delhi have been taken forwaard during Brazil's Presidency," he said. *—PTI*

>>>More on Page 5

BJP gave ₹100 cr to Cong MLAs to topple govt: Ravi

BJP's Pralhad challenges Cong to release audio, video evidence

- Ravi Gowda alleges that BJP contacted Kittur MLA Babasaheb D Patil and Chikkamagaluru MLA HD Thammaiah to lure them into defecting. However both of them denied allegations

MANDYA, 18 NOV

Days after Chief Minister Siddaramaiah claimed that the BJP was offering Rs 50 crore to Congress lawmakers to defect, in a bid to topple his government, a ruling party MLA on Monday alleged that it has been raised to Rs 100 crore by the Opposition party.

Claiming that Kittur MLA Babasaheb D Patil and Chikkamagaluru MLA HD Thammaiah are among those contacted by the saffron party, Congress MLA from Mandya Ravikumar Gowda (Ravi Ganiga) said, he has "documents and evidence" to prove that BJP was attempting to lure the ruling party legislators.

Congress MLA from Mandya Ravikumar Gowda **PHOTO: PTI**

However, both Patil and Thammaiah have clarified that they were not contacted or offered money or anything by the BJP or anyone.

BJP has challenged the Congress and its MLA to release documents and "ensure" a probe.

"Offer was made to 50 legislators, also they had said 30 will be made ministers...they say they don't want anything other than their party government...all kinds of offers were made....As MLAs are not falling for Rs 50 crore, they have now come to Rs 100 crore (offer), they are not worried about Rs 50 or 100 crore, they somehow want to form the government," he said.

Documents and evidence are there in both audio and videos, Ravi further claimed. "Who spoke to whom at which airport or hotel or guest house all are there....after releasing the documents at the earliest, I will meet the CM and request for action....I have already brought things to the notice of the CM."

BJP leader and Union Minister Pralhad Joshi challenged the Congress to release the audio and video they claim to possess, and ensure a probe. *—PTI*

K'taka mulls action against M'rashtra's guarantee ads

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah with BJP MP Basavaraj Bommai during an award function in Bengaluru on Monday **PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD**

BENGALURU, 18 NOV

Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Monday said the government was mulling over filing a suit against its counterpart in poll-bound Maharashtra for allegedly issuing false advertisements regarding his administration's flagship 'guarantee' schemes.

He said legal action is being explored against the Mahayuti government.

"It is only to mislead the people of Maharashtra in order to get the votes. He (PM) is telling lies. False advertisement is given by Maharashtra government," Siddaramaiah said in response to a question on PM Narendra Modi targeting Karnataka government's guarantee schemes during Maharashtra poll campaign, and whether government is mulling legal action against alleged misinformation about the schemes.

The Karnataka government is spending Rs 56,000 crore a year on guarantee schemes, the Chief Minister said. "They (BJP) say we don't have money. Why are such schemes not being implemented in other states where BJP is in power?" he asked.

Questioning whether JD(S)' HD Kumaraswamy had given guarantee schemes while in power, Siddaramaiah asked as to what moral rights he has to comment on Congress government's guarantee schemes.

"Let Kumaraswamy (Union Minister and former Chief Minister) speak in Delhi, Karnataka's tax contribution is Rs 4.5 lakh crore per year , but what we get is Rs 59,000-60,000 crore. If we give Rs 1, what we get back is 14 paise. Remaining money is with the centre, let him (Kumaraswamy) get more funds for the state, instead of just speaking," he said.

"I have written a letter to Prime Minister and Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman not to reduce the amount, stating that it will be unfair to farmers -- don't do it," he said, adding that the state government is giving interest free loan to farmers up to Rs 5 lakh and only 3 per cent interest up to Rs 15 lakh. *—PTI*

People will elect MVA, says DKS

Bengaluru, 18 Nov

With Maharashtra election inching closer, Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister and Congress leader DK Shivakumar on Monday expressed confidence in the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) winning the upcoming state polls. Speaking to ANI in Maharashtra's Latur, Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar stated that the people of the state will elect MVA with more than 175 seats. "In Maharashtra, we are confident that Congress will come to power with a thumping majority." Reacting to the speculation of a rift within the MVA alliance on the Maharashtra CM post, Shivkumar said, "There is no dispute on any issue; the party, after the results, will discuss the CM face. *—ANI*

Cong may crack whip against Khan for 'racist' slur: HM

MYSURU, 18 NOV

Home Minister G Parameshwara on Monday indicated that State Congress may initiate disciplinary proceedings against Minister BZ Zameer Ahmed Khan for referring to Union Minister and JD(S) leader HD Kumaraswamy as "Kaaliya" (dark-skinned), which NDA had slammed as a "racist" slur.

G Parameshwara **PHOTO: PTI**

Several Congress office-bearers have been pushing the party to crack the whip against Khan, a lawmaker from Chamarajpet, accusing him of causing damage and embarrassment to the party.

"Our state Congress President (DK Shivakumar), after the bypolls, has said his (Khan's) statement had its impact on the election. There is a disciplinary committee in the party under (K) Rahman Khan (former deputy chairman of Rajya Sabha). If the party president refers the matter to the disciplinary committee, they may call Khan and inquire him," Parameshwara said.

Many Congress leaders and those in the political circles believe that Khan's statement had an adverse impact on the party's prospects in the Channapatna Assembly segment, which went for bypolls along with Shiggaon and Sandur seats on 13 November. The results will be declared on 23 November.

BJP continuing 'Operation Lotus' in State

Parameshwara accused BJP of continuing Operation Lotus in the State. Saying BJP was still trying to buy MLAs, the Home Minister held these attempts as being "true" based on the statement made by the Chief Minister.

"We will investigate the matter if we get the correct document. Why not investigate if the record is found? BJP is known for Operation Lotus. They are experts in this," Parameshwara said.

—Salar News with Agencies

Mysuru ZP launches sanitation drive

MYSURU, 18 NOV

Mysuru Zilla Panchayat (ZP) has initiated a 20-day special drive to raise public awareness on the importance of building toilets and maintaining hygiene. The campaign, which will run from 19 November to 10 December, is part of the celebrations for World Toilet Day. With the theme "Beautiful Toilet for a Beautiful Home," the drive aims to encourage citizens to focus on sanitation and hygiene at the household level.

The decision to launch the awareness campaign was made during a preliminary meeting convened by ZP CEO KM Gayathri. The meeting, held at the ZP office in Mysuru on Monday, discussed the preparations for World Toilet Day.

During the meeting, Gayathri revealed that Mysuru district has a total of 4,45,062 families, of which 19,773 families have yet to construct toilets.

Despite the availability of government funding through various schemes, including MNREGA, these families have not yet built toilets. *—Salar News*

JD(S) MLC: Nikhil Kumaraswamy will become CM

MYSURU, 18 NOV

JD(S) MLC CN Manjegowda on Monday predicted that Nikhil Kumaraswamy has all chances of becoming Chief Minister of Karnataka. Speaking to reporters here, he said Nikhil will be elected by more than 15,000 votes in Channapatna bypolls."Nikhil is already involved in strengthening the party by touring across the State", he added. He remarked that certain statements made by Congress during hustings could potentially backfire. *—Salar News*

Boy killed in lightning strike in Mangaluru

MANGALURU, 18 NOV

A 14-year-old boy reportedly died after lightning struck him when he was sitting outside his house in Dakshina Kannada district, police said on Monday. The incident happened on Sunday evening at Kedila village in Buntwal taluk of Dakshina Kannada district. Subodh was shifted to a hospital, where he was declared brought dead, police said. *—PTI*

Didn't have any authority in Covid task force: MP

MYSURU, 18 NOV

Bengaluru Rural MP Dr CN Manjunath has denied reports that he was the chairman of Covid-19 Technical Advisory Committee which analysed data and advised government on necessary intervention. Manjunath on Monday said he was a member of the committee and didn't have any authority either in the administration or in financial matters of the task force formed by the then government during the pandemic. "My role in the committee was only to provide advice to the task force, to the Health Department and the government according to the situation. I did not have any role other than giving suggestions to the government," he said in Mysuru. The BJP MP urged the State government to hand over Covid mismanagement case to Special Investigation Team. *—Salar News*

Chamaraja MLA praises Kanakadasa's social reforms

MYSURU, 18 NOV

Chamaraja MLA K Harishgowda on Monday praised the 16th-century saint Kanakadasa for his significant role in promoting a discrimination-free society. Harishgowda made these remarks during the inauguration of the Kanakadasa Jayanthi celebrations at Kalamandir, organiSed jointly by the District Administration and the Department of Kannada and Culture.

Speaking at the event, Harishgowda highlighted Kanakadasa's contributions to social reform through his Keerthanas, which sensitized the masses about the social ills and injustices prevalent in society at the time.

The saint's teachings continue to inspire efforts toward equality and unity, he noted.

Harishgowda also lauded Chief Minister Siddaramaiah for successfully implementing the five guarantees aimed at the empowerment of women and the poor, calling the schemes a testament to the government's commitment to social welfare.

Former MLA MK Somashekhar, who also spoke at the event, expressed regret over the ongoing practices of casteism and communal discrimination, despite the efforts of saints like Basavanna, Kanakadasa, and other reformers who worked tirelessly to establish a casteless society.

Other dignitaries present at the celebration included MLC CN Manjegowda, Kaginele Branch Mutt Seer Shivananandapuri Swami, Writer Prof C Naganna, State Guarantee Implementation Committee Vice Chairperson Pushpa Amarnath, and ZP CEO Gayathri. *—Salar News*

KANAKADASA JAYANTHI

Folk artistes perform during Kanakadasa Jayanthi celebrations at Legislative House in Bengaluru on Monday **PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD**

SMUGGLING OPS: KIA CUSTOMS RESCUE 40 ENDANGERED ANIMALS

BENGALURU, 18 NOV

The customs officials at the Kempegowda International Airport (KIA) rescued at least 40 endangered animals including rep-tiles from being smuggled into the City, on Monday. Based on intel, the officials intercepted two passengers who had landed at the KIA airport from Kuala Lumpur on 11 November, and found the animals concealed in their trolley bags. As per the Special Investigation and Intelligence Branch (SIIB) officers from the Customs, the rescued animals included skinks, beaded liz-ards, tortoises, iguanas, American alligators, agile gibbon and Albino bats. The officials further said that these animals are classified under various appendices of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). A case has been registered under the Prohibition of Trafficking of Illegal Animals Act. Further investigation is ongoing. *—Salar News*

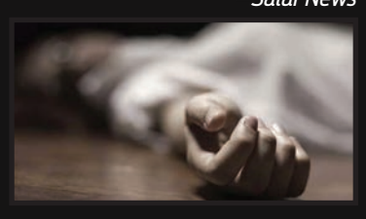
3 SUICIDES IN STATE

BEML officer allegedly dies by suicide in Mysuru

Mysuru, 18 Nov

A 54-year-old officer working with Bharat Earth Movers Limited (BEML) was found dead on Monday. The officer, identified as Mohan, was found hanging at a watchman shed in the KEB community hall located in the Dattagalli area. According to the police, Mohan, 54, had left his apartment near Bogadi to go to work on Sunday. The Kuvempunagar Police have registered a case and are investigating the incident. Further details about the motive behind the suicide are yet to be revealed.

—Salar News



(Suicide is not the solution. Help is available. Please call Tele Manas at 14416, SAHAI at 080-25497777 for support.)

18-year-old girl found dead

Bengaluru, 18 Nov

A day after the body of an 18-year-old girl was found at a house in West Bengaluru, police registered an unnatural death report (UDR) in the case. Bheemavva was found hanging inside her house in Kurubarahalli on Sunday evening, police said. Bheemavva was the daughter of labourers Mallanna and Bhagyamma, who were natives of Yadgir. The family had moved to Bengaluru a few years ago in search of employment. Bheemavva discontinued her education and took up a job as labourer alongside her parents. Her three younger sisters are continuing their education at a government school. As per the statements obtained from her parents, Bheemavva had accompanied them to work on Sunday but returned to her house in the afternoon. Her sisters had gone out to play with their friends. At this time, the girl allegedly hanged herself.

—Salar News

16-year-old boy jumps to death in City

Bengaluru, 18 Nov

A 16-year-old boy died after he allegedly jumped from the seventh floor of his apartment in Geddalahalli here, Kothanur police said on Monday. He was a first-year Pre-University student at a school in the City. The boy jumped to death between 1.30am and 5am on Monday, police said. Kothanur police have taken up the investigation to ascertain the cause of his extreme step. *—Salar News*

'BBMP MUST ACT'

Peenya industries demand better infrastructure

BENGALURU, 18 NOV

Known as one of the oldest industrial hubs in City, Peenya Industrial Area is grappling with civic mismanagement issues, including bad roads and uncollected garbage.

Peenya Industrial Association (PIA) said the industries are facing financial losses as foreign investors refuse to visit the area due to a lack of basic infrastructure. "It's a horrible situation. Garbage lies in heaps and the roads are riddled with potholes and are haphazardly asphalted," said Prakash C, a member of PIA.

The area, which is home to over 16,000 industrial units, contributes around Rs 3,000 crore as taxes and Rs 5,000 crore as payments to Bangalore Electricity Supply Company Limited annually, the association said. The goods manufactured at the industrial units here are supplied to Indian Space Research Organisation, Hindustan Aeronautics Limited and Defence Research and Development Organisation, among other prestigious private companies and organisations.

"PIA has been making repeated requests to Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike to improve infrastructure to help industrial units run smoothly," Prakash said.

Hundreds of crores are being poured into the constituency, and yet the infrastructure provided to the residents and workers here is poor, the PIA said. *—Salar News*

Hundreds of crores are being poured, and yet the infrastructure provided to the residents and workers here is poor **PHOTO: SALAR**

Visit Manipur & sack Shah: Cong to PM

Congress asks Modi to hold all-party meet ahead of Parliament session, appoint governor

NEW DELHI, 18 NOV

Amid spike in violence in Manipur, Congress on Monday asked Prime Minister Narendra Modi to visit the troubled state before the Parliament session this month and demanded Home Minister Amit Shah's resignation for the "double engine government's complete failure" there.

Congress General Secretary In-charge Communications Jairam Ramesh said Modi must first meet an all-party delegation from Manipur and then also call an all-party meeting at the national level ahead of the Parliament session starting 25 November.

Addressing a press conference at the AICC headquarters here along with Manipur Congress Chief K Meghachandra Singh and AICC in-charge of state Girish Chodankar, Ramesh demanded that Shah and Chief Minister N Biren Singh must resign.

People light candles during a protest against the killing of six people in Manipur's Jiribam, in Assam's Guwahati on Monday **PHOTO: PTI**

"From 31 July, 2024, there is no full-time governor. Before that an ST person was governor but she was removed within 18 months. We demand that immediately a full-time governor be appointed," Ramesh said.

Congress also alleged that Modi has "outsourced" Manipur to Shah.

"There is a strange 'jugalbandi' between Shah and the failed Chief Minister. Why has the Home Minister not taken cognizance of the Chief Minister 's failures and why has he been attempting to save him?" Ramesh said.

If BJP government, Modi and Shah honestly want to fight the drug mafia then why do they not act on the cases pending before the courts, he said.

"The pain of Manipur is the pain of the country. More than 300 people have died and over 60,000 have been displaced. It is a story of the complete failure of the double engine government," Ramesh said.

BJP got 32 out of 60 seats in the 2022 polls but within 15 months Manipur began to burn, he said. —*PTI*

This heinous crime has crossed all levels of barbarism... and is an act of cowardice. Those responsible for the killings should be declared as terrorists by the of India

-Abdul Nasir, Manipur's JD(U) MLA

NIA files 3 FIRs to probe fresh incidents of violence

NEW DELHI, 18 NOV

National Investigation Agency (NIA) has registered three cases in connection with the latest instances of violence in the strife-torn Manipur, according to official sources.

The cases, which were originally filed by Manipur Police, were registered by the anti-terror agency on 13 November and the investigation into these cases has begun, the sources said on Monday.

The cases taken over by the NIA are those related to the "murder of a woman at Jiribam by fully armed militants" (FIR registered at Jiribam local police on 8 November), "attack on a CRPF post located at Jakuradhor Karong and Borobekra police stations, Jiribam by armed militants" (FIR registered at Borobekra police station on 11 November) and "burning of houses and killing of civilian at Borobekra" (FIR registered at Borobekra police station on 11 November), they said.

The situation in Manipur, which has been reeling from ethnic strife since May last year, has been volatile following protests and violence after the recovery of bodies of women and children.

On 11 November, Manipur Police said 10 suspected militants were killed in a fierce gunfight with security forces after insurgents in camouflage uniforms and armed with sophisticated weapons fired indiscriminately at Borobekra police station and an adjacent CRPF camp at Jakuradhor in Jiribam. —*PTI*

Cops blow horn to silence Kolkata rape accused

KOLKATA, 18 NOV

In an unusual move to prevent the accused from speaking to the media, Kolkata Police honked the horn of a prison van and slapped its body as they transported Sanjay Roy, charged with the rape and murder of a doctor from RG Kar Medical College and Hospital, to Sealdah Court on Monday to silence him from making any remarks. This tactic followed Roy's comments about former Kolkata police commissioner Vineet Goyal, where he asserted his innocence during a previous court appearance on 11 November. The police took further precautions by swapping the prison van for a smaller vehicle to minimise the risk of disruption when escorting Roy to the courthouse. Eyewitnesses noted that the noise aimed to drown out any remarks he might make. —*PTI*

Cong, BJP seek time from EC over code violation case

NEW DELHI, 18 NOV

Congress and the BJP have requested seven more extended days from the Election Commission (EC) to respond to poll code violation complaints which was filed against each other in Jharkhand and Maharashtra. The EC has asked the presidents of the two parties to comment on the charges leveled against their party leaders. The EC has exchanged complaints between the two parties and has sought formal responses from both party presidents by 1 pm on Monday. The BJP has lodged a complaint against Congress leader Rahul Gandhi. The poll panel reminded the parties of the Commission's earlier advisory during the Lok Sabha election to keep star campaigners and leaders under check to ensure public decorum is not flouted during campaigning. —*PTI*

Firing at Ind candidate's home in Jalgaon

MUMBAI, 18 NOV

Ahead of the 20 November Maharashtra Assembly polls, an unidentified person allegedly opened fire at the residence of an independent candidate in the Jalgaon city on Monday, police said. No one was injured in the incident, they said, adding that efforts were on to identify and nab the culprit. The shooter allegedly fired three rounds at the house of Independent candidate Sheikh Ahmed Hussain Gulam Hussain which was located at Shera Naka, a Jalgaon police official said. The incident occurred at 4 am, and police are currently scanning CCTV footage to identify the shooter. A case against an unidentified shooter has been registered at MIDC police station under the Arms Act, and an official states that further investigation is ongoing. —*PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

Plaint against Pawan over remarks on Hyd

HYDERABAD, 18 NOV

A complaint was lodged with the police here against Andhra Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan over his remarks that the people of Old City (Hyderabad) have always criticised the Indian culture and the festivals of India. In a post on 'X', an AIMIM activist tagging a media report on Pawan Kalyan's comments requested Hyderabad Police Commissioner CV Anand to register a case against the actor-politician, alleging that the remarks insulted Hyderabad residents, particularly those from the Old City. Kalyan made those statements during an election rally in Maharashtra on Sunday, while highlighting the importance of "Sanatan Dharma". —*PTI*

DAY AFTER QUITTING AAP

BJP General Secretary Dushyant Gautam welcomes Kailash Gahlot as he joins BJP in New Delhi on Monday **PHOTO: PTI**

Former Delhi minister Kailash Gahlot joins BJP

NEW DELHI, 18 NOV

Kailash Gahlot, the former Delhi minister, publicly joined the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on Monday, just a day after resigning from the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP). During his announcement, Gahlot accused his former party of continuously aggravating tensions with the central government and straying from the values that initially attracted supporters.

Gahlot was welcomed into the BJP at party headquarters by notable figures, including Union ministers Manohar Lal Khattar and Harsh Malhotra, and Delhi unit president Virendra Sachdeva.

He refuted claims that his departure from AAP stemmed from pressure by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) or Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI). Instead, he emphasised that AAP had compromised its foundational values and prioritised political ambitions over public welfare.

Highlighting the need for constructive relations with the central government for Delhi's development, Gahlot remarked, "We have increasingly only been fighting for our own political agenda." He expressed concerns over the party's shift away from its original ideology, claiming it had become "khas" (special) rather than remaining "aam" (ordinary).

Khattar described Gahlot's switch as a significant shift in Delhi's political landscape, with expectations that his induction could enhance BJP's prospects in upcoming assembly elections. Gahlot's resignation letter pointed out "awkward" controversies within AAP, further questioning their commitment to being the 'Aam Aadmi'.

Meanwhile, Nangloi Jat MLA Raghuvinder Shokeen who is a Jat leader from outer Delhi be inducted into the Clcabinet in the Atishi government. —*PTI*

Never pitted Hindus against Muslims: Shinde

MUMBAI, 18 NOV

Launching a strong defence of BJP's 'ek hai toh safe hai' poll pitch, Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde on Monday said nowhere has the party asked Hindus to unite against Muslims.

In an interview to PTI, Shinde expressed confidence that the Mahayuti would win the 20 November Assembly elections convincingly, allowing it to continue with its agenda of development with renewed vigour. Poll results will be announced on 23 November.

Accusing the opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) of practicing the divide-and-rule policy of the British, Shinde said, "What has Prime Minister Narendra Modi said? Be united and be safe. Come together and vote to take Maharashtra on the path of development and progress. What is wrong in this?"

"Where have we asked Hindus to unite and fight against the Muslims? They (opposition) say it openly," the chief minister said.

He said various schemes of the government do not discriminate on religious lines and ensure that the benefits reach every community.

"It is the Congress that is practicing the policy of divide-and-rule followed by the British," Shinde said accusing the opposition of spreading fear. —*PTI*

Maharashtra CM Eknath Shinde addresses a public meeting at Nerul in Navi Mumbai on Monday **PHOTO: PTI**

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi at a press conference in Mumbai Monday **PHOTO: PTI**

RaGa mocks BJP's 'ek hai to safe hai' slogan

RANCHI, 18 NOV

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi has ridiculed the BJP's slogan "ek rahenge toh safe rahenge" (if we remain united, we will be safe), claiming it denotes unity among Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Home Minister Amit Shah, and billionaires like Mukesh Ambani. Addressing a press conference in Ranchi, Gandhi attacked Modi for failing to visit the crisis-stricken state of Manipur, which has been troubled for the past 18 months, alleging Shah's disinterest is due to "vested interests" at play.

Gandhi also voiced concerns over the privatisation of the country's key assets, accusing the BJP government of transferring airports and natural resources to billionaires without adequate transparency. He underscored the need for a caste census, asserting it would aid in wealth distribution and inform policy decisions concerning Dalits, Adivasis, and OBCs, who constitute 73% of India's population.

He reiterated the Congress party's commitment to conducting a caste census and increasing reservation beyond 50%, contrary to the PM's claims that he opposes such measures. Furthermore, he characterised the BJP as "anti-tribal" and accused them of undermining Jharkhand's economic development by withholding funds, thereby creating obstacles for the state. —*PTI*

PM WENT ABROAD AS HE HAS CONCEDED DEFEAT: REDDY

Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy asserted that Prime Minister Narendra Modi's overseas visit ahead of the Maharashtra elections indicates that BJP has conceded defeat. Reddy challenged the BJP to substantiate its claims regarding the Congress government's fulfilment of poll guarantees in Telangana. He offered to arrange a flight to transport a central oversight committee to the state for verification. Reddy highlighted Modi's unfulfilled promises from 2014, including doubling farmers' incomes and creating two crore jobs annually. He claimed to have forgiven loans for 23 lakh farmers within 25 days of taking office, and he has also provided 50,000 government jobs in the last 10 months. —*PTI*

BJP's campaign is to tarnish JMM: Soren

RANCHI, 18 NOV

In the lead-up to the elections, Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren has accused the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) of conducting a "whisper campaign" to undermine his reputation and that of the state. He claims the BJP has spent over Rs 1 crore in each assembly constituency to sway voters, alleging that the party has brought in individuals from Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Odisha, and Bengal to incite fear among the electorate.

Soren previously charged the BJP with running "shadow campaigns" aimed at discrediting his leadership, asserting that the party created "95,000 WhatsApp groups" to orchestrate a smear campaign against the JMM-led coalition.

"They do not discuss their achievements; instead, they choose to spread lies," Soren alleged, sharing a video purportedly showing people discussing the elections on roads. —*PTI*

POLLS ARE FOR HINDU PRIDE: HIMANTA

RANCHI, 18 NOV

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma and Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath delivered scathing attacks on the ruling JMM-led coalition in Jharkhand during a series of election rallies on Monday. Sarma characterised the upcoming election as critical for the poor, youth, and women, asserting that it also represents Hindu pride. He accused Chief Minister Hemant Soren's government of failing to fulfil promises made during the 2019 elections, including pledges for jobs and unemployment allowances. Adityanath echoed these concerns, claiming that areas in Jharkhand have become hubs for illegal activities led by infiltrators. He vowed to expel these individuals if the NDA is elected.—*PTI*

The Chief Minister urged the residents of Jharkhand to openly support him rather than be intimidated by these tactics.

He stressed that while the BJP has spent heavily to tarnish his image, he has not invested any funds in promotions, a claim he invites sceptics to verify through social

BRS' key member Dileep arrested in Hyderabad

HYDERABAD, 18 NOV

Dileep Konatham, a senior member of BRS and former digital media director in Telangana, was arrested by Hyderabad Cyber Crime police for allegedly spreading false information. Konatham had recently published a critical article targeting the state administration and Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, accusing the government of authoritarian practices.

Before his arrest, Konatham posted a photograph of himself standing next to a lion statue, along with a strong-worded statement. He wrote, "Telangana is not a dictatorship to file cases against journalists for publishing investigative news articles. Hope @RahulGandhi takes note of the draconian government that Revanth Reddy is running in Telangana!" In September, he was questioned by the city police after posting about an alleged assault on a tribal woman in the Asifabad district. Senior BRS leaders, including former Minister T Harish Rao, have called for an end to "retaliatory actions" —*Agencies*

PHOTO: X

'BEHAVES LIKE JAMAAT MEMBER'

Vijayan's remarks on IUML head sparks row

T'PURAM,18 NOV

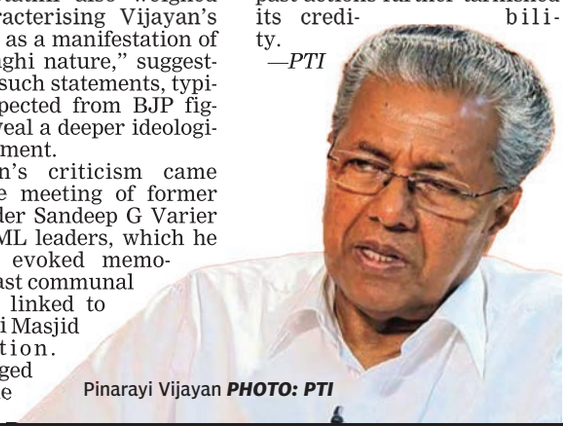
Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan's recent comments regarding Indian Union Muslim League (IUML) supremo Panakkad Sadiq Ali Shihab Thangal have sparked vehement reactions from the Congress party and IUML. At a bypoll campaign meeting for LDF candidate P Sarin in Pallakad, Vijayan accused Thangal of behaving like a member of Jamaat-e-Islami, prompting strong rebuttals from both parties.

The IUML, the second-largest coalition partner in the Congress-led UDF, responded angrily through an editorial in its mouthpiece "Chandrika," labelling Vijayan's remarks an indication of his ties with communal forces. The editorial praised Thangal as "the brand ambassador of communal harmony" and condemned the Chief Minister's intrusion into assessing his qualifications.

Criticising Vijayan's stance, the IUML stated that his comments aided the Sangh Parivar's agenda to disrupt communal harmony in the state. It pointed to the government's handling of police officers involved in the disruption of the Thrissur Pooram and issues surrounding waqf land, alleging a collaboration with communal interests.

Congress leader Rahul Mamkootathil also weighed in, characterising Vijayan's remarks as a manifestation of his "Sanghi nature," suggesting that such statements, typically expected from BJP figures, reveal a deeper ideological alignment.

Vijayan's criticism came after the meeting of former BJP leader Sandeep G Varier with IUML leaders, which he claimed evoked memories of past communal tensions linked to the Babri Masjid demolition. He charged that the IUML's historical reluctance to confront Congress over its past actions further tarnished its credibility. —*PTI*



Pinarayi Vijayan **PHOTO: PTI**

Enforce GRAP-4: SC to Delhi-NCR states

Constitutional duty of states to give pollution-free environs to citizens, says SC

NEW DELHI, 18 NOV

Flagging delay in implementation of stricter measures for checking the alarming rise in pollution, the Supreme Court on Monday asked the Delhi-NCR states to immediately set up teams to enforce GRAP 4 restrictions which, it said, will remain in effect even if the AQI is below 450. A bench of Justices Abhay S Oka and Augustine George Masih said it is the constitutional duty of all states to ensure all citizens live in a pollution-free environment. "We direct restrictions under stage 4 of GRAP to continue even if AQI level falls below 450," the bench said. It asked all Delhi-NCR states to immediately take a call on conducting physical classes up to class 12 and directed the setting up of a mechanism where complaints can be made for violation of restrictions under stage 4 of the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP). At the outset, the bench questioned the Delhi government and the Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) over the delay in invoking pollution preventive measures under GRAP stages. Asking the Delhi government and neighbouring NCR states to file their compliance affidavit by November 22 on the implementation of preventive measures to check pollution, the bench said steps may be taken besides those suggested under GRAP. First implemented in 2017, the GRAP is a set of anti-air pollution measures followed in the capital and its vicinity according to the severity of the situation. —*PTI*

Visitors at Lodhi Gardens amid low visibility due to smog, in New Delhi on Monday *PHOTO: PTI*

CM Atishi blames stubble burning

BJP-led Central government has been doing politics over pollution. It took no step to check stubble burning in states like Haryana, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh – all ruled by the saffron party

—Atishi Marlena, Delhi Chief Minister

11 flights diverted at Delhi airport

NEW DELHI, 18 NOV

A total of 11 flights were diverted and many delayed at the Delhi airport on Monday morning as bad weather conditions resulted in poor visibility, impacting aircraft operations, said an official.

SpiceJet and IndiGo informed passengers through X that their flights may be affected due to poor visibility conditions in the national capital.

Out of the 11 flights, 10 were diverted to Jaipur and one to Dehradun, the official said, and added that some of the pilots were not trained for CAT III operations due to which flights had to be diverted. CAT III trained pilots are allowed to take off or land planes at very low visibility conditions.

"Low visibility procedures are in progress at Delhi airport. All flight operations are at present normal," Delhi International Airport Ltd (DIAL) had said in a post on X early morning on Monday.

DIAL operates the Indira Gandhi International Airport, which handles around 1,400 flight movements daily. It also advised passengers to contact the airlines concerned for flight information. SpiceJet, on Monday, said due to poor visibility in Delhi, all departures/arrivals and their consequential flights may get affected. —*PTI*

Family row: Man axes mother-in-law to death in J&K

JAMMU, 18 NOV

A man allegedly killed his mother-in-law and critically injured his wife and her sister over a family dispute in Udhampur district of Jammu and Kashmir, police said on Monday. Suresh Kumar attacked his mother-in-law Shanti Devi, wife Lalita and sister-in-law Anju Devi with a sharp edged weapon at Kiya village in Ram Nagar area on Sunday night. He fled the scene, leaving the trio in a pool of blood, police officials said. Kumar's brother-in-law Rakesh said the former was under the influence of liquor when he came to their home and attacked the women with an axe. While doctors declared Devi brought dead, the other two women were referred to district hospital at Udhampur. —*PTI*

PHOTO: PIXABAY

Man rams car into bride's guests at wedding, 9 injured

JAIPUR, 18 NOV

Nine people were injured when a man from groom side allegedly ran over them with his car outside a wedding venue at Ladpura village in Dausa district of Rajasthan on Sunday night. The accused was part of the wedding procession and was bursting firecrackers outside the venue when he had an altercation with the bride's brother, which soon escalated, police said. The accused then sat in his car and drove it into a group of people from the bride's side of the family, injuring nine of them. Seven of the victims were critically injured and have been referred to the SMS Hospital in Jaipur, they said. Police said the accused managed to flee from the spot after mowing down the people, and searches were being conducted to trace him. —*PTI*

Couple killed, bodies set on fire in Bihar

NALANDA, 18 NOV

A couple was killed and their bodies set on fire on Sunday night inside their house at Dogi village in Bihar's Nalanda district, police said on Monday. The deceased are Vijay Prasad and his wife. Both were residents of Dogi village under the Chabilapur police station area. "Preliminary investigation suggests that the couple was first murdered and the bodies were then set on fire inside their house," said Nalanda Superintendent of Police Bharat Soni. Rajgir Sub-Divisional Police Officer Sunil Kumar Singh said, "The villagers claimed that both (the couple) were present at a religious gathering till 11.30pm on Sunday." "By the time police reached the spot on Monday, the bodies were charred. Some remains have been sent for post-mortem, while the ashes may be sent for scientific examination," he said. —*PTI*

Five booked for harassment, triple talaq in Thane

THANE, 18 NOV

Thane police have registered a case against a man and four other members of his family after he allegedly harassed his wife for Rs 4 lakh and pronounced triple talaq to dump her, an official said on Monday. The 33-year-old woman is a lawyer hailing from Nagpur, currently residing at Bhiwandi Maharashtra's Thane district. The accused allegedly demanded Rs 4 lakh or a car from her between January and July this year. When she could not meet their demands, they allegedly beat her up and threatened her with dire consequences, he said. Later, her husband pronounced triple talaq and discontinued the relationship, the woman said. The police on Saturday registered a case.—*PTI*

PHOTO: X

15 booked for Gujarat MBBS student's death

PATAN, 18 NOV

Police have registered an FIR against 15 students of a medical college in Gujarat's Patan district following the death of an 18-year-old student, who was allegedly ragged by them, officials said on Monday.

The accused, all second-year MBBS students, allegedly made some juniors, including the victim, stand in a hostel room for more than three hours on Saturday night and subjected them to "mental and physical torture", according to the First Information Report (FIR).

The accused students have been suspended from their hostel and academic activities until further orders, said officials from the GMERS Medical College and Hospital at Dharpur in Patan.

The victim, Anil Methaniya, a first-year MBBS student, fell unconscious and died allegedly after being made to stand for three hours during ragging by his seniors at a hostel of the college on Saturday night, the college dean, Dr Hardik Shah, said on Sunday.

The college's anti-ragging committee chaired by Dr Shah took the statements of 26 students – 11 of the first-year and 15 second-year students. The committee found that 11 first-year students were subjected to ragging by a group of 15 second-year students, a college official said on Monday.

The FIR was filed based on a complaint by the college's additional dean Dr Anil Bhathija. The 15 accused students have been charged with sections for culpable homicide not amounting to murder, wrongful confinement, unlawful assembly, and using obscene words. —*PTI*

4 T'GANA MEDICOS SUSPENDED FOR RAGGING

HYDERABAD, 18 NOV

Four students at the Government Medical College in Nalgonda district, Telangana, were suspended for allegedly ragging their juniors, officials said on Monday.

The incident took place in the boys' hostel where five students from Kerala were "ragged physically" by seniors on 11 November, after which the juniors lodged a complaint with college authorities the next day.

A preliminary inquiry was conducted and after a meeting of the anti-ragging committee, the four senior students were suspended for a period ranging from one to six months, the officials said.

All appropriate measures have been taken to prevent the recurrence of such incidents. Anti-ragging awareness meetings are proposed for the students in association with the police department, the college principal said. —*PTI*

- The incident took place in the boys' hostel where five students from Kerala were "ragged physically" by seniors on 11 November, after which the juniors lodged a complaint with college authorities the next day

DEBT RECOVERY HIT

SC notice to MoF over DTR vacancies

NEW DELHI, 18 NOV

The Supreme Court on Monday issued notices to the Ministry of Finance (MoF) on a PIL highlighting critical vacancies in Debt Recovery Tribunals (DRTs) across India.

A bench comprising Chief Justice Sanjiv Khanna and Justice Sanjay Kumar heard the submissions of senior advocate KB Sounder Rajan along with lawyer Sudarshan Rajan, appearing for PIL petitioner Nischay Chaudhary, and sought the response of the Union Ministry of Finance.

The PIL raised concerns that nearly one-third of the 39 DRTs in the country are currently non-functional due to absence of Presiding Officers, undermining their core objective of expediting debt recovery for banks and financial institutions.

The DRTs are set up under the Recovery of Dues to Banks and Financial Institutions Act of 1993 to enable banks and financial institutions recover bad debts from borrowers.

According to the PIL, as of 30 September, 2024, 11 DRTs are without Presiding Officers, severely impacting their ability to resolve cases efficiently.

The petitioner argues that this inaction frustrates the purpose of the 1993 law, which was enacted to ensure timely adjudication and recovery of debts.

The PIL also emphasises that speedy justice is a fundamental right under Articles 14 and 21 of the Constitution. —*PTI*

PHOTO: ANI

KRISHNAKUMAR MAY BE MANIPUR CJ

NEW DELHI, 18 NOV

The Supreme Court Collegium on Monday recommended the appointment of Madras High Court judge Justice D Krishnakumar as the chief justice of the Manipur High Court. The Collegium, headed by Chief Justice of India Sanjiv Khanna and comprising Justices BR Gavai and Surya Kant, took the decision in a meeting held on Monday. A vacancy in the office of the chief justice of the High Court of Manipur would arise upon the retirement of Justice Siddharth Mridul on 21 November, 2024. Therefore, appointment to that office is required to be made, the Collegium noted. "It is proposed to appoint Mr. Justice D Krishnakumar, presently serving as a Judge of the Madras High Court, as the Chief Justice of High Court of Manipur with effect from the date on which the incumbent Chief Justice demits office on retirement," it said. Justice D Krishnakumar is due to retire on 21 May 2025. —*PTI*

SC junks plea to probe Netaji death

NEW DELHI, 18 NOV

The Supreme Court on Monday rejected a petition seeking an inquiry into the death of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose. The bench comprising Justice Surya Kant and Justice Ujjal Bhuyan, rejected the PIL, saying that the top court was not a remedy for everything. "It's not the court's job to run the government," it said. The apex court also came down heavily on the petitioner, saying the plea contains "reckless and irresponsible allegations" against leaders who are no longer alive. —*PTI*

Andaman mulls seaplane to woo tourists

PORT BLAIR, 18 NOV

To promote tourism, Andaman and Nicobar administration in association with Union Civil Aviation Ministry and Airports Authority of India is planning to develop seaplane connectivity between Port Blair and other islands. It is planning seaplane service between Port Blair and Swaraj Dweep (Havelock island), Port Blair and Shahed Dweep (Neil island) and Port Blair and Long Island (North and Middle Andaman), said Vishwendra, Andaman and Nicobar administration's civil aviation secretary. —*PTI*

Teacher beats student, booked

ARWAL, 18 NOV

A 12-year-old boy sustained a serious eye injury after being allegedly beaten by his teacher at a school in Bihar's Arwal district for not completing his homework, police said on Monday.

Police have registered a case against the teacher and the management of the private school in the district's Umairabad area following a complaint by the victim's family.

The boy, a class 5 student, is currently undergoing treatment at a hospital in Patna.

Amit Raj, the victim, said, "I sustained a severe injury to my left eye when my teacher started beating me with a stick for not doing my homework on 13 November. I told my parents, and they immediately took me to the hospital for treatment."

Family members of the victim said the boy was referred to a Patna hospital for more specialised care.

Arwal Superintendent of Police Rajendra Kumar Bheelsaid, "A case has been registered for causing injury to the student. The matter is under investigation." —*PTI*

Police have registered a case against teacher and school management in Bihar after the boy sustained eye injury *REPRESENTATIONAL PHOTO*

COP29 IN BAKU

India seeks fair play in climate action

BAKU, 18 NOV

At a high-level ministerial roundtable on pre-2030 ambition at the UN climate talks in Baku on Monday, India urged developed countries to remove barriers to technology transfer, increase public climate finance and avoid unfair trade measures disguised as climate action.

India's environment secretary Leena Nandan also urged rich nations to take the lead in cutting emissions and achieving net-zero by 2030. "This is essential to build a stronger, sustainable future," she said.

Nandan said innovative technologies are critical for a low-carbon future and they must be made accessible to developing countries. Developing countries need solutions like clean energy and carbon removal, but barriers like intellectual property rights make it hard for them to access these technologies, she said.

"COP29 should come up with practical solutions to make technology affordable, adaptable, and relevant for developing countries," Nandan added.

India also asked developed countries to close the massive climate finance gap delaying climate action in developing countries. "Trillions of dollars are needed for clean energy projects, disaster-resilient infrastructure and climate adaptation... It should be ensured that that deviation from least-cost development pathways committed by developing countries are fully met though public finance by developed countries.

"Not doing so puts additional cost on people in developing countries bearing a disproportionate burden of climate change without having caused the problem," Nandan said.

India also raised strong objections to unilateral trade measures like the European Union's Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM), which it said unfairly shifts the costs of climate action to poorer nations. —*PTI*

Indian triathlete Pragnya Mohan speaks during a session on sports and climate action at COP29 UN Climate Summit in Baku on Monday *PHOTO: PTI*

Javed Akhtar acquitted in RSS remarks case

MUMBAI, 18 NOV

A Mumbai court has acquitted veteran lyricist Javed Akhtar after the complainant withdrew a defamation case against him over his alleged objectionable remarks on the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS).

Mulund First Class Judicial Magistrate SD Chakkar on 8 November disposed of the case as withdrawn. A copy of the order was made available on Monday.

Advocate Santosh Dubey, who claims to be an RSS supporter, filed the complaint against Akhtar before the magistrate court in October 2021 under sections 499 (defamation) and 500 (punishment for defamation) of the Indian Penal Code.

Dubey alleged that Akhtar, in a television interview, unnecessarily dragged the name of the RSS and defamed the organisation in a "calculated and well planned move". He said Akhtar allegedly drew parallels between the Taliban and Hindu extremists.

However, Dubey recently filed another plea before the magistrate, seeking to withdraw the complaint against Akhtar. He told the court that the "matter is settled between the parties in mediation" and therefore, he "does not want to prosecute the accused". —*PTI*

Veteran lyricist Javed Akhtar *PHOTO: PTI*

HONOURING THE FALLEN

After 1,000 days of war, a makeshift memorial has appeared in the center of Kyiv, with thousands of blue-and-yellow flags honoring soldiers who died defending Ukraine. Created by citizens in the absence of an official government memorial, it has become a place for grief and remembrance. Loved ones visit often, leaving flags, portraits, and flowers to honour the fallen. Located in Independence Square, the memorial not only honors the dead but also represents the heavy cost Ukraine is paying in the war ***PHOTO: X***

BRAZIL HOSTS G20 AMID WARS, TRUMP'S RETURN

With Brazil preparing to host the Group of 20 summit, it appears unlikely the leading rich and developing nations will sign on to a meaningful declaration regarding geopolitics: The meeting Monday and Tuesday in Rio de Janeiro is overshadowed by two major wars and Donald Trump's recent election victory.

Heightened global tensions and uncertainty about an incoming Trump administration have tempered any expectations for a strongly worded statement addressing the conflicts in the Middle East and between Russia and Ukraine.

Experts instead anticipate a final document focused on social issues like the eradication of hunger — one of Brazil's priorities — even if it aims to include at least a mention of the ongoing wars.

"Brazilian diplomacy has been strongly engaged in this task, but to expect a substantively strong and consensual declaration in a year like 2024 with two serious international conflicts is to set the bar very high," said Cristiane Lucena Carneiro, an international relations professor at the University of Sao Paulo.

After Brazil's President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silvathwarted far-right former President Jair Bolsonaro's reelection bid in 2022, there was some excitement in the international community at the prospect of the leftist leader and savvy diplomat — who Barack Obama once called "the most popular politician on Earth" — hosting the G20.

Bolsonaro had little personal interest in international summits, let foreign policy be guided by ideology and clashed with several leaders, including France's Emmanuel Macron. Lula took office and often quoted a catchphrase: "Brazil is back."

Brazil under Lula has reverted to its decades-old principle of non-alignment to carve out a policy that best safeguards its interests in an increasingly multipolar world. That involves talking to all parties,

Activists from a Brazilian Indigenous movement hold cutouts of global leaders ahead of G20 Summitin Rio de Janeiro ***PHOTO: PTI***

which experts say gave Brazil a privileged position to host a summit such as the G20.

But his administration's foreign policy has at times raised eyebrows. A Brazil-China peace plan for Russia and Ukraine doesn't call for Russia's withdrawal from Ukraine and has been slammed by Ukrainian leader Volodymyr Zelenskyy. And Lula sparked a diplomatic incident with Israel after comparing its actions in Gaza to the Holocaust.

Donald Trump's win in the US presidential election earlier this month and the imminent return of an America First doctrine may also hamper the diplomatic spirit needed for broad agreement on divisive issues.

"If we have one certainty, it is regarding Donald Trump's scepticism towards multilateralism," Carneiro said.

Two officials from Brazil and one from another G20 nation say Argentine negotiators are standing in the way of a joint declaration. They spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak publicly. Two of them said Argentina's negotiators have raised several objections to the draft. They most vehemently oppose a clause calling for a global tax on the super-rich — which they had previously accepted, in July — and another promoting gender equality.

Ambassador Mauricio Lyrio, Brazil's key negotiator at G20, told journalists on 8 Novovember that the leaders' final declaration should address the wars in Ukraine and the Middle East, but that diplomats were still discussing how to reach universally acceptable language.

"The main message, naturally, is that we need to achieve peace not only regarding these conflicts but all conflicts," he said in the capital Brasilia, adding that Lula's launch of a global alliance against hunger and poverty on Monday is just as important as the final statement.

"The leaders' declaration will be the crowning achievement. But, at the same time, as instructed by the president himself, we have a G20 focused on concrete actions, such as the launch of a Global Alliance Against Hunger, with a package of very concrete social programs and innovative mechanisms to meet the resources needed for implementing them."

Lula, a former trade unionist who hails from a humble background, made the fight against hunger a priority during his first two terms as president (2003-2010) both at home and abroad. The number of undernourished Brazilians fell by more than 80% in 10 years, according to a 2014 U.N. report.

Lula's hunger alliance is the only one of Brazil's primary aims for a G20 declaration that will be obtained, according to Thomas Traumann, a former government minister and a political consultant based in Rio.

"Brazil wanted a global deal to fight poverty, a project to finance green transition and some consensus over a global tax for the super-rich. Only the first one has survived," Traumann said.

President Joe Biden will attend the summit after a stop in Lima for the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum and then travel on to Manaus, a city in Brazil's Amazon rainforest. It will be the first time a sitting American president sets foot in the Amazon, and the trip's objective is to highlight "commitment to environmental protection and respect for local cultures," according to a 12 November statement from the US Embassy in Brazil.

White House officials insist that Biden's visits to APEC and the G20 will be substantive, with talks on climate issues, global infrastructure, counternarcotic efforts and one-on-one meetings with global leaders, including Chinese President Xi Jinping. Those officials say Biden also will use the summits to press allies to keep up support for Ukraine as it tries to fend off Russia's invasion and not lose sight of finding an end to the wars in Lebanon and Gaza.

Any commitments Biden makes may be overturned by the next White House administration, according to Danielle Ayres, an international relations professor at the Federal University of Santa Catarina. *—PTI*

LETTERS

write to us at salarenglishdigital@gmail.com

SALAR

BOOKER PRIZE WINNER

Asma
ORBITAL BOOK REVIEW

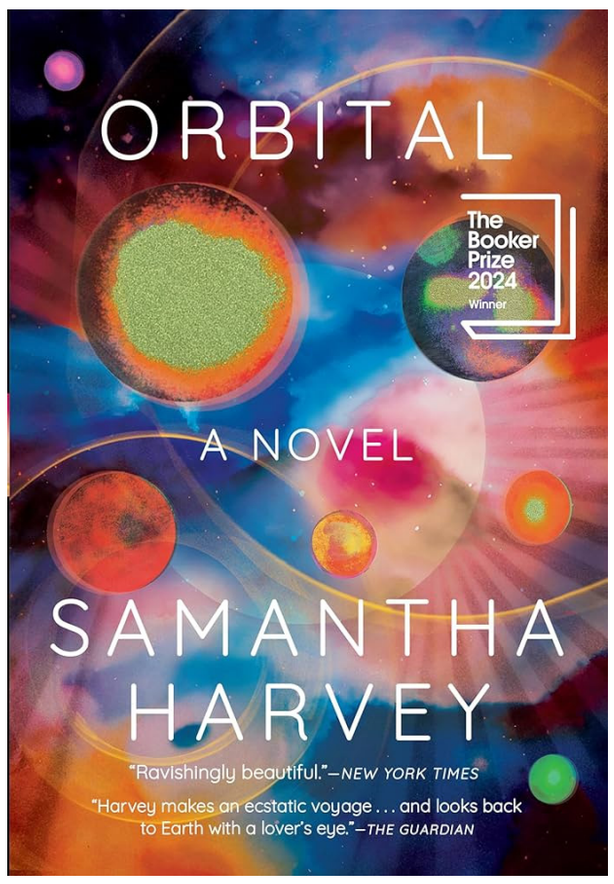
I had stopped in the middle of the book to say one word - Beautiful.

I finished the book and looked up to see what others had to say about it and found that my assessment was not very far from what author Joshua Ferris, who reviewed the book for New York Times, had said. He called the book "Ravishingly Beautiful".

The book spans 'One Single Day' in the life of six astronauts (make that 4 astronauts and 2 cosmonauts) aboard a space ship, 250 miles above the earth, which is orbiting the planet at 17,500 miles per hour. What does it look like - this pale blue dot at the far end of an ever-expanding universe on which rests everything we know and care for and believe in and think about?

What do six members of our own species, men and women who, to quote the bard, -- "with hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions; fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, healed by the same means, warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer"-- see when they look down on upon the rest of us during the 16 sunrises and 16 sunsets that make one Space Day?

This earth where each thing seamlessly dissolves into the next, the only borders that exist are between land and sea, where politics and wars are meaningless, this earth on whose surface have evolved and I quote from the book - "the igniters of fire, the hackers of stone, the melters of iron, the ploughers of earth, the worshippers of gods, the tellers of time, the sailors of ships, the wearers of shoes, the traders of grain, the discoverers of lands, the schemers of systems, the weavers of music, the singers of song, the mixers of paint, the binders of books, the crunchers of numbers, the slingers of arrows, the observers of atoms, the adorners of bodies, the gobblers of pills, the splitters of hairs, the scratchers of heads, the owners of minds, the losers of minds, the predators of everything, the arguers with death, the lovers of excess, the excess of love, the addled with love, the deficit of love, the lacking for love, the longing for love, the love of longing, the two-legged thing, the human being."


ORBITAL
The Booker Prize 2024 Winner
A NOVEL
SAMANTHA HARVEY
"Ravishingly beautiful."—NEW YORK TIMES
"Harvey makes an ecstatic voyage . . . and looks back to Earth with a lover's eye."—THE GUARDIAN

The book spans 'One Single Day' in the life of six astronauts aboard a space ship, 250 miles above the earth

This earth, the only home we will ever know, at least for now. What do you see, when you see it from up there?

Read the book at one stretch like I did - the prose is to die for. You will also find yourself stopping every few minutes gasping for breath as you take it all in – both your own insignificance as well as the grandeur of the Universe.

PS: A word of caution before you begin: Put your ego in a tiny little box (tiny little box should suffice), lock up the box with the sturdiest lock you can find, throw the key into the deepest ocean, and then begin reading – **Orbital**

—Salar News
Author is editor of Salar Digital English Daily

Spies like them: The intelligence war between Iran and Israel

The charging of CIA official Asif Rahman for allegedly leaking US intelligence of Israeli preparations for retaliatory strikes on Iran in October has brought into open view the shadow war of espionage and counterespionage that has raged between actors locked in a regional conflict for decades.

The Iran-based Telegram channel Rahman is accused of leaking to disavows any connection with Iran's government, but that the affair has embarrassed a US administration reeling from an earlier conviction of another of its officers, Jack Teixeira, for leaking Pentagon papers is undeniable.

The Rahman leak provides a glimpse into the murky interplay of Iranian, Israeli and US spy agencies that have helped shape the current conflict and, almost as importantly, our perception of it.

Catching spies

In late October, Israel's internal security agency, Shin Bet, said it had arrested seven Israeli nationals living in occupied East Jerusalem on suspicion of carrying out espionage on Iran's behalf.

A day earlier, another seven Israeli nationals in Haifa had been arrested on suspicion of aiding the enemy, in this case, Iran's Ministry of Intelligence, in wartime.

Israeli police sources confirmed that more Iran-aligned cells operating in the country are suspected.

This isn't new. In September, 73-year-old Israeli businessman Moti Maman was also accused by Shin Bet and the Israeli police of working with Iranian intelligence, allegedly offering to kill Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and other political figures in return for an advance payment of $1m.

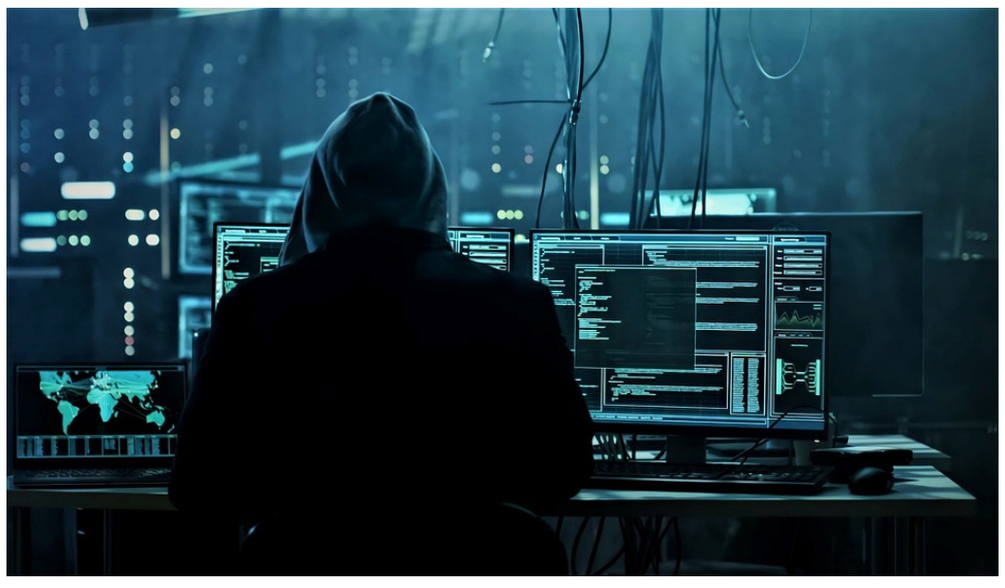
Conversely, Iran has arrested several of its citizens throughout Israel's war on Gaza on charges of having collaborated with the Israeli spy agency Mossad.

In December, Iran executed three men and a woman accused of acting on behalf of Mossad in Iran and undertaking acts, from sabotage to the kidnapping of Iranian security officials.

In September, in the wake of attacks attributed to Israel on the communications systems of Iran's ally Hezbollah, Iran announced the arrests of 12 citizens on charges of collaborating with Israel and planning attacks in the country.

Espionage in a changing world

While electronic intercepts, surveillance and monitoring of social media have become valuable intelligence tools, human intelligence remains key to information gathering and military targeting.



Iran's attempts to penetrate Israeli society are only recently coming to light while there has long been coverage of Israel's use of covert intelligence on Iran ***PHOTO: PIXABAY***

"Human intelligence plays a significant role in the ongoing covert war between Israel and Iran," Sina Toossi, a senior fellow at the Center for International Policy, said.

"Both countries are heavily engaged in intelligence gathering with espionage and counterespionage operations informing their broader strategic calculations," he added.

The Israelis arrested in Haifa are accused of 600 to 700 intelligence-gathering missions for Iran over two years, including targeting a senior official – presumably for potential assassination similar to Israel's high-profile assassinations, including that of Hamas political leader Ismail Haniyeh in Iran in July.

"In Iran, Israel demonstrated its capabilities through a series of high-profile assassinations and sabotage missions, often attributed to Mossad's deep penetration.

"On the other hand, Iran has made efforts to establish human intelligence networks in Israel, as highlighted by the recent arrests of several Israeli citizens accused of spying for Iran," Toossi said.

Turning the tide

Israel with its small and generally cohesive society has long been considered almost impregnable by foreign spy agencies, defence analyst Hamze Attar said.

However, the strains of the current conflict, the rise of the extreme right and bitter divisions over the 2023 judicial reforms championed by Netanyahu have worked at pre-existing societal cracks, resulting in a fundamentally changed Israeli society.

It is into those divisions, analysts have suggested, that Iranian intelligence is making inroads.

That the first group of the 14 agents arrested in Haifa had immigrated to Israel from Azerbaijan 10 years ago and the second group was regarded as Arab Israelis and, therefore, slightly outside Israel's mainstream is significant, according to Attar.

"This [was] huge," he said.

"Israel has been thought of as … a single identity, one taught from an early age that they are under constant danger of attack from their Arab neighbours."

"If Iran can turn these two groups" into acting on its behalf in Israel, "they can turn more," he said.

Great games

Iran's attempts to penetrate Israeli society are only recently coming to light while there has long been coverage of Israel's use of covert intelligence on Iran.

Aiding Israel's efforts is Iran's sheer size with a population that dwarfs Israel's at a scale of about 9.5 to 1 and social and political fault lines running through its society – from protests against the 2022 death of Mahsa Amini for allegedly not wearing her headscarf correctly to minorities demanding more rights.

"Israel's stated aim since the Iranian Revolution of 1979 is to foment the overthrow of the regime from within," Ahron Bregman of the Department of War Studies at King's College London said.

"That informs the way they work. Israel has had a long period to plan, to recruit and to structure their intelligence within Iran," he said.

In contrast, Iran appears to have invested much of its long-term planning in assembling a network of allies, such as Lebanon's Hezbollah, which provide it with information.

—Courtesy, Al Jazeera

PHOTO: FB

Hunt on for husband of woman found murdered in UK car

LONDON, 18 NOV

The UK police investigating the murder of 24-year-old Harshita Brella, whose body was recovered from a car boot in east London, have launched a manhunt for her Indian-origin husband who they suspect fled the country after killing his wife earlier this month. Chief Inspector Paul Cash said more than 60 detectives were working on the case as the force released an image of Pankaj Lamba, the accused husband, in an appeal for information. "We suspect Lamba transported Harshita's body from Northamptonshire to Ilford by car.," he added. The force said it had received a call on Wednesday regarding concerns for Brella's welfare and officers were deployed to her home at Skegness Walk in Corby, Northamptonshire. After getting no answer, the police launched a missing person investigation. —*PTI*

2 killed in shootings during New Orleans parade

NEW ORLEANS, 18 NOV

Two people were killed and 10 others wounded in two separate shootings along a parade route and celebration on Sunday, authorities said. There were no immediate arrests. Officers responding to reports of gunfire shortly after 3.30 pm on an avenue in the city's St Roch neighbourhood found eight victims with gunshot wounds, according to a news release from the New Orleans Police Department. All eight were taken to hospitals in unknown condition. Police later said a ninth wounded person arrived at a hospital via a private car. About 45 minutes later, police received another report of gunfire as revellers were crossing the Almonaster Avenue Bridge, just over a kilometre to the north. —*PTI*

Dozens fall sick, 1 dead after eating carrots in US

NEW YORK, 18 NOV

An outbreak of E coli has infected dozens of people who ate bagged organic carrots, and one person died from the infection. Altogether, 39 people were infected and 15 hospitalised in 18 states after eating organic whole and baby carrots sold by Grimmway Farms, the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said on Sunday. Grimmway Farms, based in Bakersfiled, California, has recalled the carrots, which included whole and baby organic carrots sold in bags under multiple brand names. The carrots are no longer in stores but the CDC is warning consumers to not eat recalled bag carrots and to check their refrigerators or freezers and throw away any carrots that fit the description. —*PTI*

B'desh sets 1 month deadline for probe against Hasina

DHAKA, 18 NOV

A special tribunal in Bangladesh on Monday told investigators they have one month to complete their work on ousted former prime minister Sheikh Hasina and her close aides who face charges of crimes against humanity after hundreds of people were killed in a mass uprising this summer. Golam Mortuza Majumdar, the head judge of the three-member International Crimes Tribunal, set 17 December for investigators to finish their work, as the tribunal heard updates Monday from police about what the country's security agencies have done to arrest Hasina and her close aides. Hasina has been living in exile in India since 5 August when she fled the country amid the student-led protests. The Dhaka-based International Crimes Tribunal on 17 October issued arrest warrants for Hasina. —*PTI*

Biden's missile ban lift risks WW3: Russia

Biden allows Kyiv to use US-supplied missiles for strikes inside Russia escalating tensions

Russia on Sunday launched a massive drone and missile attack on Ukraine, described by officials as the largest in recent months, targeting energy infrastructure and killing civilians **PHOTO: PTI**

MOSCOW/MANAUS, 18 NOV

Russian lawmaker said on Monday that the administration of President Joe Biden was risking World War Three by allowing Ukraine to use US-made weapons to strike deep into Russia.

"These guys, Biden's administration, is trying to escalate the situation to the maximum while they still have power and are still in office," Butina told Reuters.

US President Joe Biden on Sunday authorised Ukraine to use American-supplied long-range missiles to strike deeper inside Russia, easing limitations on the weapons.

The decision allowing Kyiv to use the Army Tactical Missile System, or ATACMs, for attacks farther inside Russia comes as President Vladimir Putin positions North Korean troops along Ukraine's northern border to try to reclaim hundreds of miles of territory seized by Ukrainian forces.

Biden's move also follows the presidential election victory of Trump, who has said he would bring about a swift end to the war. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and many of his Western supporters have been pressing Biden for months to allow Ukraine to strike military targets deeper inside Russia with Western-supplied missiles, saying the US ban had made it impossible for Ukraine to try to stop Russian attacks on its cities and electrical grids.

Some supporters have argued that the limitation and other US constraints could cost Ukraine the war. Biden had remained opposed, determined to hold the line against any escalation that he felt could draw the US and other NATO members into direct conflict with nuclear-armed Russia. News of Biden's decision followed meetings over the last two days with the leaders of South Korea, Japan and China.

Biden did not mention the decision during a speech at a stop to the Amazon rainforest in Brazil on his way to the Group of 20 Summit. —*PTI*

WAR WATCH RUSSIA & US

North Korea calls for expanding nuclear forces

SEOUL, 18 NOV

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un renewed his call for a "limitless" expansion of his military nuclear programme to counter US-led threats in comments reported on Monday. This was his first direct criticism toward Washington since Donald Trump's win in the US presidential election.

At a conference with army officials on Friday, Kim condemned the United States for updating its nuclear deterrence strategies with South Korea and solidifying three-way military cooperation involving Japan, which he portrayed as an "Asian NATO" that was escalating tensions and instability in the region. Kim also criticised the United States over its support of Ukraine against a prolonged Russian invasion. He insisted that Washington and its Western allies were using Ukraine as their "shock troops". —*PTI*

US, Manila ally to secure shared military intelligence

MANILA, 18 NOV

The United States and the Philippines signed an agreement on Monday to secure the exchange of highly confidential military intelligence and technology in key weapons the US would provide to Manila.

Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin and his Philippine counterpart, Gilberto Teodoro, signed the legally binding General Security of Military Information Agreement in Manila.

Two Philippine security officials have told The Associated Press that such an agreement, similar to ones Washington has signed with other allied countries, would allow the US to provide the Philippines with higher-level intelligence and more sophisticated weapons, including missile systems.

It would also provide the Philippine military access to US satellite and drone surveillance systems. —*PTI*

Houthis target ship in Red Sea

Dubai, 18 Nov

A suspected attack by Yemen's Houthi rebels targeted a commercial ship late on Sunday travelling through the southern reaches of the Red Sea, though it caused no damage nor injuries, authorities said. The attack comes as the rebels continue their monthslong assault targeting shipping through a waterway that typically sees USD 1 trillion in goods pass through it a year over the Israel-Hamas war in Gaza and Israel's ground offensive in Lebanon. A ship's captain saw that "a missile splashed in close proximity to the vessel" as it travelled near the Bab el-Mandeb Strait. —*PTI*

Lankan Prez opts for smaller Cabinet

COLOMBO, 18 NOV

Sri Lankan President Anura Kumara Dissanayaka on Monday appointed a 21-member Cabinet in the new NPP government, keeping with his pre-election promise to streamline the governance system and ease the burden on taxpayers.

The National People's Power (NPP) has been advocating a smaller government to reduce costs for the public. Since the NPP won the presidential election in September, the government functioned with just 3 ministers, including the President.

As per the island nation's Constitution, there is a provision for appointing a 30-member Cabinet.

Dissanayaka retained the finance and defence portfolios, while appointing 12 new parliament members to key positions and entrusting eight veteran members, who have served since 2000, with significant responsibilities.

Among the fresh faces in the Cabinet are five academic professors.

Prime Minister Harini Amarasuriya who holds the education portfolio and Saroja Savithri Paulraj who has the women's and child affairs portfolio are the two women members in the Cabinet. Paulraj, a minority Tamil from the Sinhala majority south, was involved in the party's long struggle.

A significant feature of the swearing-in ceremony was the fisheries minister Ramalingam Chandrasekaran, who took his oath in Tamil, highlighting the representation of the minority community in the new government.

The new parliament will convene on Thursday. —*PTI*

Ayatollah Ali Khamenei **PHOTO: X PROFILE**

- Dissanayaka retained the finance and defence portfolios, while appointing 12 new parliament members to key positions and entrusting eight veteran members.

Iran's Supreme Leader is in coma: Report

TEHRAN, 18 NOV

Iran's Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, is in a coma, and his son, Mojtaba Khamenei, has been secretly chosen as his successor according to a report by Israeli news outlet Ynet News, citing Iran International.

Mojtaba Khamenei, the 85-year-old leader's second son, was allegedly selected during a secret meeting of Iran's Assembly of Experts on 26 September. This decision reportedly followed significant pressure from Khamenei and his representatives to ensure the 60-member body agreed unanimously.

Mojtaba, who is rarely seen in public, has gained considerable influence in Iran's political system in recent years. He is known for his role in suppressing the 2009 post-election protests. In 2021, he received the title of "Ayatollah", meeting the constitutional requirement to assume the position of Supreme Leader.

The decision to name Mojtaba as successor has reportedly been kept secret to avoid public outrage. Assembly of Experts warned its members of serious consequences if details of the meeting were leaked, according to Iran International. Khamenei plans to transfer power to Mojtaba while still alive, to ensure a smooth transition and reduce opposition, sources said. Rumors of Khamenei's declining health have circulated for weeks. Earlier on Saturday, reports claimed he had fallen into a coma. Last month, The New York Times described him as "seriously ill."

Iranian authorities, however, have not issued any official statement confirming or denying these claims. –*Agencies*

Ayatollah Ali Khamenei **PHOTO: ANI**

Big Tech critic Brendan Carr to be Trump's Communications Chief

WEST PALM BEACH, 18 NOV

US President-elect Donald Trump has announced he will appoint Brendan Carr, a vocal critic of the Joe Biden administration's telecommunications policies and big tech, as the new chair of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC).

Carr, 45, currently serves as the leading Republican commissioner on the FCC, the independent agency responsible for overseeing telecommunications regulation. Carr is a longtime member of the commission and served previously as the FCC's general counsel. He has been unanimously confirmed by the Senate three times and was nominated by both Trump and President Joe Biden to the commission. The FCC is an independent agency that is overseen by Congress but Trump has suggested he wanted to bring it under tighter White House control, in part to use the agency to punish TV networks that cover him in a way he doesn't like. Carr has embraced Trump's ideas about social media and tech. —*PTI*

> **The pushback from the Washington establishment around my father's choices for Cabinet proves they are just the kind of disruptors that voters are demanding**
>
> —Donald Trump Jr

Trump has no ties with Imran: Pak-American leader

WASHINGTON, 18 NOV

US President-elect Donald Trump has no personal relationship with former Pakistan prime minister Imran Khan, a prominent Pakistani-American businessman and Trump backer has said.

Sajid Tarar, who heads the Muslims for Trump organisation, also said that Trumpwould strengthen ties with India and keep a close watch on allegations of human rights violations in Bangladesh. "A perception is being created by a particular party in Pakistan that he (Khan) has a personal relationship with Donald Trump. This is not true. It's a fact that, as president, Trump had invited Khan to the White House as the prime minister of Pakistan," Tarar told PTI in an interview. Trump will "not interfere" in the internal affairs of Pakistan or its judiciary to get Khan out of jail, he asserted. —*PTI*

Pak Army commando, 6 militants killed in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

PESHAWAR, 18 NOV

A Pakistan Army commando and six militants were killed in a gunfight between security forces and terrorists during a search operation in the restive northwestern province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, sources have said.

The incident occurred on Saturday in the Lur Maudan area in Tirah Valley of Khyber bordering Afghanistan.

A commando of the Pakistan Army was killed and another injured in the incident.

Sources said that heavy gunfire and explosions were heard from the area. The Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) has been active in the area, with several attacks targeting security forces. The Pakistani government has repeatedly accused the TTP of operating from sanctuaries in Afghanistan.

There has been an uptick in the incidents of terrorism in Pakistan since the Taliban took over the government in Kabul in 2021, dashing hopes in Islamabad. —*PTI*

BACK-TO-BACK STORMS

Man-yi worsens crisis in typhoons-hit Philippines

MANILA, 18 NOV

Typhoon Man-yi left at least three villagers missing, destroyed houses, knocked out power in entire towns and displaced large numbers of villagers before blowing away from the northern Philippines, worsening the crisis wreaked by five previous storms, officials said Monday.

Man-yi was one of the strongest of the six major storms to hit the northern Philippines in less than a month and had sustained winds of up to 195km per hour when it slammed into the eastern island province of Catanduanes on Saturday.

Disaster-response officials said they were checking if the deaths of two villagers were directly related to Man-yi's onslaught in eastern Camarines Norte province.

More than a million people were affected by the typhoon and two previous storms, including nearly 7,00,000 who fled their homes and moved to emergency shelters or relatives' homes, according to the Official of Civil Defense.

Nearly 8,000 houses were damaged or destroyed and more than 100 cities and towns were hit by power outages due to toppled electric posts, it said.

In the worst-hit province of Camarines, officials pleaded for additional help after fierce winds and rain damaged more houses and cut off electricity and water supplies in the entire province, along with cellphone connections in many areas, provincial information officer Camille Gianan said.

Welfare officials transported food aid, drinking water and other help but more is needed over the coming months, Gianan said. Many villagers will need construction materials to rebuild their houses, she said.

The rare number of back-to-back storms and typhoons that lashed Luzon in just three weeks left more than 160 people dead, affected 9 million people and caused such extensive damage to communities, infrastructure and farmlands that the Philippines may have to import more rice, a staple food. —*PTI*

PHOTO: X@PAKISTANIINDEX

Climate talks in Baku head into 2nd week

BAKU, 18 NOV

United Nations talks on getting money to curb and adapt to climate change resumed on Monday with tempered hope that negotiators and ministers can work through disagreements and hammer out a deal after slow progress last week.

That hope comes from the arrival of the climate and environment ministers from around the world this week in Baku, Azerbaijan, for the COP29 talks. They'll give their teams instructions on ways forward.

"We are in a difficult place," said Melanie Robinson, economics and finance program director of global climate at the World Resources Institute. "The discussion has not yet moved to the political level — when it does I think ministers will do what they can to make a deal."

Talks in Baku are focused on getting more climate cash for developing countries to transition away from fossil fuels, adapt to climate change and pay for damages caused by extreme weather. But countries are far apart on how much money that will require. Several experts put the sum needed at around USD 1 trillion. —*PTI*

COP29 Baku Azerbaijan

PHOTO:FREEPIK

Gold, silver prices rebound in wedding season

NEW DELHI, 18 NOV

Gold and silver prices rebounded on Monday in the national capital mainly on the back of ongoing wedding season buying by jewellers and retailers as well as strong global trend, according to All India Sarafa Association. Snapping a four-day losing streak, gold of 99.9 per cent purity rose by Rs 400 to Rs 77,450 per 10 grams in the local markets. The precious metal had closed at Rs 77,050 per 10 grams on Thursday. Silver also climbed Rs 1,810 to reclaim the Rs 92,000 per kg-mark against the previous close of Rs 90,190 per kg on Thursday. Price of gold of 99.5 per cent purity jumped Rs 400 to Rs 77,050 per 10 grams. The yellow metal settled at Rs 76,650 per 10 grams. *—PTI*

RBI Governor urges banks to curb unethical practices

MUMBAI, 18 NOV

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor Shaktikanta Das highlighted the urgent need for enhanced internal governance frameworks within banks to combat unethical practices, including the mis-selling of financial products and lax Know Your Customer (KYC) protocols. Addressing at the conference of Directors of Private Sector Banks, Das said bank staff incentives must be structured to prevent encouraging unethical behaviour, cautioning that short-term gains could lead to long-term repercussions such as reputational damage and financial penalties. The RBI governor also pointed out the importance of adapting to technological advancements and emerging risks, urging bank boards to provide robust guidance in navigating this evolving environment. *—PTI*

SBI to open 500 new branches by 2025, says FM

MUMBAI, 18 NOV

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced on Monday that the State Bank of India (SBI) plans to open an additional 500 branches, expanding its total network to 23,000 by the end of the fiscal year 2025. Speaking at the centenary celebration of SBI's main branch in Mumbai, she highlighted the bank's remarkable growth from its origins in 1921, when three presidency banks merged to establish the Imperial Bank of India. Since its transformation into SBI in 1955, the bank's branches have increased from 250 to approximately 22,500 currently. With a market share of 22.4% in deposits, Sitharaman praised SBI's digital capabilities, stating it can manage up to 20 crore UPI transactions daily. *—PTI*

Unemployment rate dips to 6.4% in Sept quarter

MUMBAI, 18 NOV

The unemployment rate for people aged 15 years and above in urban areas dipped to 6.4 per cent in the July-September quarter, according to the National Sample Survey Survey. Joblessness, or unemployment rate, is defined as the percentage of unemployed people in the labour force. The unemployment rate in the September quarter of FY24 was 6.6 per cent. The unemployment rate for people aged 15 years and above in the previous April-June quarter of FY25 was 6.6 per cent in urban areas, the 24th Periodic Labour Force Survey showed. The unemployment rate among females in urban areas declined to 8.4 per cent in July-September 2024 from 8.6 per cent in the same quarter a year ago. Among males, the unemployment rate in urban areas declined to 5.7 per cent in July-September 2024 from 6 per cent in the same quarter a year ago. *—PTI*

Market continues to decline amid foreign fund outflows

Outflow from Indian equity markets this month is Rs 22,420 cr

PHOTO: ANI

MUMBAI, 18 NOV

Benchmark stock indices, the BSE Sensex and NSE Nifty, extended their decline on Monday, pressured by ongoing foreign fund outflows, selling in IT stocks, and weak signals from US markets. The 30-share Sensex dropped by 241.30 points, or 0.31 per cent, closing at 77,339.01 after reaching a low of 76,965.06 during the day—its fourth consecutive day of decline. Meanwhile, the Nifty fell 78.90 points, or 0.34 per cent, to settle at 23,453.80, marking its seventh consecutive day of losses.

Among the major laggards in the Sensex pack were Tata Consultancy Services, Infosys, NTPC, HCL Technologies, Axis Bank, Tech Mahindra, Bajaj Finserv, Sun Pharma, IndusInd Bank, and Reliance Industries. Conversely, Tata Steel, Hindustan Unilever, Mahindra & Mahindra, Nestle, and State Bank of India saw gains.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 1,849.87 crore on Thursday, contributing to a total outflow of Rs 22,420 crore from Indian equity markets this month. The ongoing sell-off has resulted in a cumulative outflow of Rs 15,827 crore from Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs) in 2024 to date.

- Sensex dropped by 241.30 points, or 0.31 per cent, closing at 77,339.01 after reaching a low of 76,965.06 during the day. Nifty fell 78.90 points, or 0.34 per cent, to settle at 23,453.80, marking its seventh consecutive day of losses

Analysts cited a slowdown in earnings growth, rising inflation impacting the rupee, and lowered expectations for a Federal Reserve rate cut as key factors affecting market sentiment. Global markets reflected a mixed picture, with Asian indices showing varied performance and European markets trading lower. *—PTI*

US TARIFF HIKES

PHOTO: X

India's export sector to face challenges

NEW DELHI, 18 NOV

A recent report by CRISIL indicates that proposed tariff hikes by US President-elect Donald Trump could pose significant risks to India's export sector, yet the country's services trade surplus and robust remittance inflows may offer some stability. The report highlighted that India's export market is currently grappling with various challenges, including geopolitical uncertainties and potential risks to performance.

While the fiscal year began positively with steady growth in merchandise exports, the momentum faltered in the second quarter, culminating in a contraction. However, October saw a remarkable resurgence, with merchandise exports growing by 17.3 per cent year-on-year, the highest rate in 28 months. This rebound came after a modest 0.5 per cent growth in September and a contraction of 5.8 per cent in July and August. In October, India's exports reached USD 39.2 billion.

The contraction in oil exports and widening trade deficits due to imports outpacing exports raise concerns. The resilience of India's services trade surplus and strong remittances is expected to maintain the current account within a safe zone amidst these external pressures. *—PTI*

Rupee recovers from all-time low, at 84.40

MUMBAI, 18 NOV

The Indian rupee made a slight recovery, gaining 6 paise to settle at 84.40 (provisional) against the US dollar on Monday, following a retreat in the value of the American currency. The recovery, however, was moderated by ongoing withdrawals of foreign funds and lacklustre sentiment in domestic equity markets, coupled with rising crude oil prices.

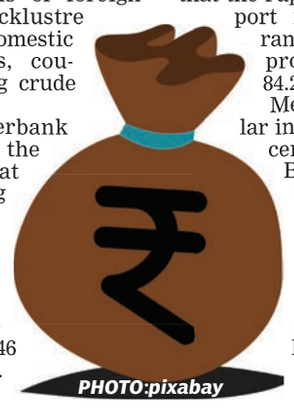


PHOTO:pixabay

At the interbank forex market, the rupee opened at 84.42, reaching an intra-day high of 84.37 before closing at 84.40. This follows a fall of 7 paise to an all-time low of 84.46 on Thursday. The forex market was closed on Friday due to Guru Nanak Jayanti.

Jateen Trivedi, VP Research Analyst at LKP Securities, noted minor support for the rupee due to reduced Foreign Institutional Investor (FII) selling in anticipation of upcoming state elections in Maharashtra. He suggested that the rupee could find support in the 84.45-84.52 range, with resistance projected between 84.25-84.30.

Meanwhile, the dollar index fell by 0.06 per cent to 106.55, and Brent crude rose by 0.79 per cent to USD 71.60 per barrel. The BSE Sensex and Nifty both saw declines, while FIIs offloaded shares worth Rs 1,849.87 crore on Thursday. *—PTI*

ROBUST GROWTH

India may surpass direct tax collection target: CBDT Chief

NEW DELHI, 18 NOV

The Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) chairman, Ravi Agarwal, announced on Monday that the Indian government is likely to surpass its direct tax collection target of Rs 22.07 lakh crore for the current fiscal year. Speaking at the inauguration of the Taxpayers Lounge at the India International Trade Fair (IITF), Agarwal noted the robust growth in both corporate and non-corporate tax collections.

As of 10 November, the net direct tax collection has surged by 15.41 per cent, totalling Rs 12.11 lakh crore. This figure comprises Rs 5.10 lakh crore from corporate tax and Rs 6.62 lakh crore from non-corporate taxes, which covers contributions from individuals, Hindu Undivided Families (HUFs), and firms. The government also collected Rs 35,923 crore through the Securities Transaction Tax (STT) during this period.

Ravi Agarwal PHOTO:ANI

Agarwal also addressed the deadline for taxpayers who have yet to declare foreign income or assets, reminding them they have until 31 December to submit their revised returns for the 2023-24 fiscal. The tax department is actively notifying high-value asset holders via SMS and email regarding compliance requirements.

In a bid to simplify the income tax legislation, Agarwal revealed that over 6,000 suggestions have already been received for review. *—PTI*

PHOTO: X

IT SECTOR TO SEE MUTED GROWTH IN Q3 OF FY25

NEW DELHI, 18 NOV

The IT sector is projected to experience muted growth in the third quarter of FY25, largely attributed to seasonal factors, as per a recent report by Centrum. The report indicates that a rebound is expected in the fourth quarter as firms begin to leverage newly signed contracts. A cautious client approach towards discretionary spending has impacted demand for IT services, contributing to modest revenue growth anticipated in Q3.

However, the medium-term outlook remains hopeful, driven by the increasing utilisation of advanced technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI), digital solutions, and cloud migration. Notably, initial recovery signs in the banking, financial services, and insurance (BFSI) sector suggest potential for improved demand. IT firms are bolstering their AI and machine learning capabilities to meet rising interest in generative AI solutions, which are predicted to enhance productivity across industries.

Despite ongoing challenges, the report outlines a potential recovery for the IT sector as macroeconomic stability improves. The Nifty IT index has already seen a decline of over 2.5 per cent, with major players such as TCS, Tech Mahindra, and Infosys witnessing share price drops of up to 3 per cent. *—ANI*

India's steel users hit by port delays

NEW DELHI, 18 NOV

The Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI) has issued a stark warning regarding the dire situation faced by over 10,000 steel user units in India due to ongoing port delays and stringent regulatory requirements. The think tank is urging the government to streamline import processes and digitise systems to alleviate the mounting pressures on the sector.

Global Trade Research Initiative urged the government to streamline import processes and digitise systems PHOTO:X

GTRI highlighted that protective policies for domestic steelmakers, such as import restrictions and quality control measures, have inadvertently burdened industries reliant on imported steel. The operational and financial challenges faced by these units jeopardise their production and export capacities.

Ajay Srivastava, founder of GTRI, stated, "Port delays and red tape are choking India's steel user industries, creating significant financial strain." He pointed out that essential imports are subjected to excessive scrutiny, complicating manufacturing efforts.

The government's Steel Import Monitoring System (SIMS) requires detailed declarations prior to the arrival of goods, and Quality Control Orders (QCOs) necessitate registration with the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) for specific products. However, the indiscriminate extension of these requirements by Customs has led to confusion and delays, as BIS often struggles to issue No Objection Certificates (NOCs) in a timely manner. GTRI calls for efficient processes that foster competitiveness across the steel sector to avoid hindering India's goals in global manufacturing. *—PTI*

Navi Mumbai airport to get water taxis

THANE, 18 NOV

Union Minister Nitin Gadkari has announced that proposed water taxi services will allow commuters to reach the upcoming Navi Mumbai International Airport from anywhere in Mumbai in just 17 minutes, substantially reducing travel time. Speaking at a rally in Thane ahead of the Maharashtra state assembly elections on 20 November, Gadkari outlined the government's initiatives to enhance connectivity and alleviate traffic congestion in the Mumbai and Thane areas.

The Navi Mumbai International Airport is slated to commence operations in March 2025, with jetties already constructed to facilitate the water taxi service. Gadkari emphasised the potential of utilising Mumbai's extensive sea routes to cut down on traffic and reduce air pollution.

Nitin Gadkari PHOTO:PTI

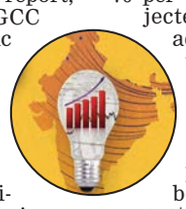
Additionally, Gadkari introduced plans for amphibious sea planes designed to operate in smaller bodies of water, lessening reliance on traditional runways. He reiterated the searches for investors to bring these to fruition.

The minister also discussed strategies for managing freight traffic in urban areas and unveiled an inter-city electric bus service, featuring 18-metre-long buses that can accommodate 135 passengers and operate for 40 kilometres on just a 30-second charge. *—PTI*

'India's GCCs to become $100B industry by 2030'

NEW DELHI, 18 NOV

A recent report has revealed that India's Global Capability Centres (GCCs) are poised to develop into a USD 100 billion industry by 2030, with expectations to employ over 2.5 million professionals. The report, titled "India's GCC Landscape: A Strategic Pathway for Mid-Sized Aspirational Corporations to Scale Beyond," indicates that India is home to more than 1,700 GCCs, generating approximately USD 64.6 billion in annual revenue while currently employing 1.9 million people across various functions.



The report highlights that GCCs in India are evolving beyond traditional service roles to become essential portfolio and transformation hubs with a broad range of high-impact functions. By 2030, the workforce within these centres is expected to exceed 2.5 million, solidifying India's significance in the strategic operations of global corporations.

Furthermore, by 2026, over 70 per cent of GCCs are projected to incorporate advanced AI capabilities, such as machine learning for operational analytics and AI-driven customer support. India's competitive advantage—boasting operational costs up to 40 per cent lower than Eastern Europe—positions it as a desirable destination for global firms striving for efficiency without compromising quality. The report's insights are drawn from extensive surveys and interviews with leading figures in the industry. *—PTI*

BE ON GUARD

Meesho acts against 22 million illegal trades

NEW DELHI, 18 NOV

The e-commerce platform Meesho backed by SoftBank revealed significant measures taken to combat fraudulent activities, successfully acting against 22 million suspicious transactions over the past year. The report, titled 'Trust Assurance Report', outlines the company's deployment of innovative analytical models and advanced data science frameworks that have led to the prevention of 1.3 million bot orders and the blocking of 7.7 million scam attempts from accessing its platform.

Meesho prevented 1.3 million bot orders and blocked 7.7 million scam attempts from accessing its platform over the past year PHOTO:X

The report indicates that Meesho has filed 12 legal cases, including nine related to account takeover fraud, targeting over 40 suspects in Kolkata and Ranchi. Working closely with law enforcement, the platform boasts an impressive 98 per cent success rate in tackling such fraud instances.

Moreover, Meesho has registered three FIRs concerning lottery fraud, wherein victims were lured by messages containing malicious links promising substantial rewards. This type of fraud has become a prevalent challenge across the industry, and the company has launched extensive investigations in Kolkata, Bengaluru, and Ranchi to curb these schemes. Notably, the report states that incidents of lottery fraud have decreased by 75 per cent since October 2023.

In collaboration with threat intelligence platforms, Meesho has dismantled over 18,000 fraudulent social media accounts and around 130 fake websites and applications misuse its brand. The Delhi High Court has recognised Meesho as a "well-known mark", granting a permanent injunction against fraudsters operating dubious websites. The court also instructed law enforcement to investigate, freeze related bank accounts, and take action against these fraudsters. *—PTI*

PHOTO: PCB's X account

Javed now Pak's interim coach till Champions Trophy

LAHORE, 18 NOV

Former pacer Aaqib Javed will remain Pakistan's interim head coach in limited-overs cricket till the Champions Trophy and will also continue in his role on the national selection panel, the Pakistan Cricket Board confirmed here on Monday. The board said while Javed will handle responsibilities of the being the team's head coach, it will continue its search for another candidate. Javed has coached Pakistan Super League side Lahore Qalandars in the past and also the Sri Lankan team for a short stint earlier this year as their fast bowling coach. The board said Javed will be assigned additional responsibilities after the Champions Trophy. Javed was roped in after Pakistan's white ball coach Gary Kirsten resigned before the tour of Australia due to some differences with the PCB. *—PTI*

Aus's Vettori to exit Perth Test early for IPL auction

PERTH, 18 NOV

Australia's assistant coach Daniel Vettori will be leaving his duties mid-way through the opening Test against India here to attend the IPL mega auction over the weekend. The IPL auction will be held in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, on 24-25 November, clashing with the Perth Test scheduled from 22 November. Besides being Australia's assistant coach, the 45-year-old is also the head coach of IPL franchise SunRisers Hyderabad (SRH). Cricket Australia's (CA) national development coach Lachlan Stevens will be filling in for Vettori during the Perth Test. Besides the New Zealander, Ricky Ponting and Justin Langer will also be missing out on commentary duties for Channel Seven due to the IPL auction, as they happen to be head coaches of Punjab Kings and Lucknow Super Giants, respectively. *—PTI*

Nelly Korda rallies in Florida for her 7th LPGA win

BELLEAIR, 18 NOV

Nelly Korda was back to competition for the first time in nearly two months and didn't miss a beat. She ran off five straight birdies on the back nine to stage another comeback, closing with a 3-under 67 to win The Annika for her seventh LPGA Tour title this year. Korda had a rough start and said she didn't have many happy thoughts when she made the turn at 2 over for the day, two shots behind Charley Hull. Starting with a birdie on No. 11, she made five in a row on her way to a three-shot victory. Korda, who earlier this year tied an LPGA record with five straight victories, became the first player to win seven times in a season since Yani Tseng in 2011. No other American had won seven times in a season since Beth Daniel in 1990. *—PTI*

Ganguly backs Ashwin for Border Trophy

Ganguly calls for a fair chance for Sarfaraz

Ravichandran Ashwin
PHOTO: X

NEW DELHI, 18 NOV

Former India captain Sourav Ganguly is convinced that seasoned spinner Ravichandran Ashwin 'must play' in the Border Gavaskar Trophy series opener against Australia in Perth.

After months of wait, India and Australia, two heavyweights in the world of Test cricket, will begin their fierce rivalry in Perth from Friday.

With last-minute injuries and the dwindling form of players in the Indian camp, the selection will be a headache for head coach Gautam Gambhir, especially after suffering a home series whitewash against New Zealand.

In the presence of Ashwin, Ravindra Jadeja and Washington Sundar, the most probable scenario would be India fielding just one tweaker in the playing XI.

On the back of his lacklustre outing in the recent Tests, Ashwin could be on the verge of missing out on another big overseas match.

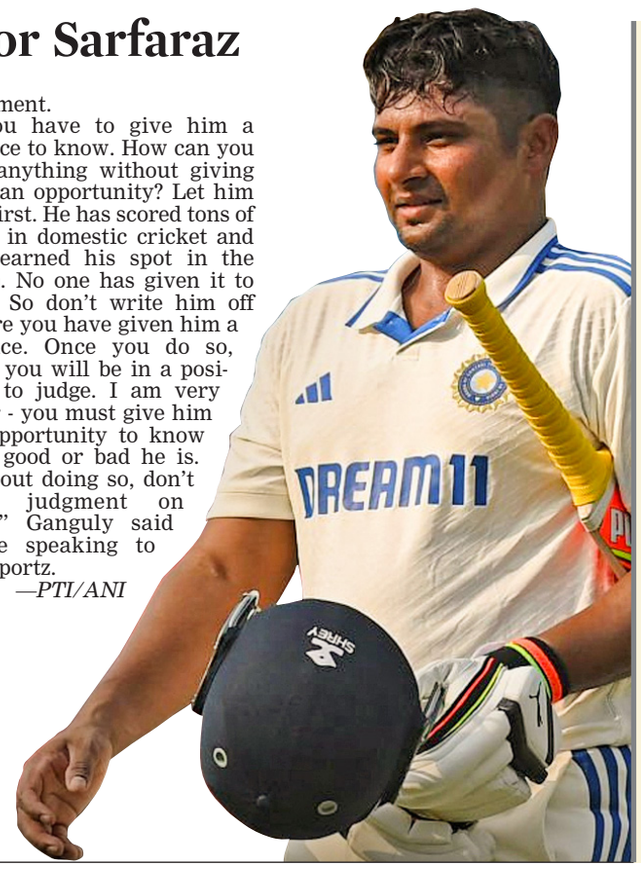
"There is no debate. Ashwin must play. Your best spinner must play. In Test cricket, play specialists. Also, against the number of left-handers in the Australian line-up, Ashwin is certain to have an impact," Ganguly said while speaking to Boria Majumdar on Revsportz.

Ganguly has come out in strong support of giving Sarfaraz Khan a fair chance in the upcoming Border-Gavaskar Trophy in Australia. In response to questions about Sarfaraz's suitability for the challenging Australian conditions, Ganguly emphasised the importance of providing opportunities before passing judgment.

"You have to give him a chance to know. How can you say anything without giving him an opportunity? Let him fail first. He has scored tons of runs in domestic cricket and has earned his spot in the team. No one has given it to him. So don't write him off before you have given him a chance. Once you do so, then you will be in a position to judge. I am very clear - you must give him an opportunity to know how good or bad he is. Without doing so, don't pass judgment on him," Ganguly said while speaking to Revsportz.

—PTI/ANI

> **Ash (Ashwin) is an incredible bowler. I've gone head-to-head with him for basically my whole career, so I've learned a lot from Ash**
>
> —Nathan Lyon, Veteran Australian



Sarfaraz Khan
PHOTO: X

Vaughan slams India's decision to skip warm-up

SYDNEY, 18 NOV

Baffled by India's decision to head into the high-profile Border-Gavaskar Trophy against Australia without a proper warm-up game, former England captain Michael Vaughan has raised concerns about how the tourists would get into a "competitive mindset" without match practice.

"I can't get my head around a team like India only wanting to play an intra-squad game leading into a series against Australia in their own backyard," Vaughan told 'Fox Cricket'.

"I just can't see how you get yourself in that competitive mindset of consequence by playing an intra-squad game. Time will tell." *—PTI*

Australian cricketers clean sweep Pakistan in T20 series

HOBART, 18 NOV

Marcus Stoinis bludgeoned 61 not out off 27 balls as Australia swept Pakistan 3-0 in the Twenty20 series with a seven-wicket victory in the final game on Monday.

The hosts had a 29-run win in a rain-shortened seven-overs-a-side match in the first T20 in Brisbane, before fast bowler Spencer Johnson then grabbed a career-best 5-26 to propel Australia to a 13-run win.

Stoinis smacked five sixes – three in one over off Shaheen Shah Afridi -- and five fours as Australia raced to 118-3 in 11.2 overs. Fast bowlers Shah Afridi (1-43) and Haris Rauf (0-34) conceded 77 runs off their combined six overs in a one-sided game.

"It's been a great week," Australia captain Josh Inglis said. "We've had a lot of fun as a group. When Stoinis is going like that, he is really hard to stop."

Earlier, Pakistan lost nine wickets for 56 runs on the way to a meagre total of 117 in 18.1 overs despite Babar Azam (41) and Haseebullah Khan (24), one of two changes made from the second game, scoring at a brisk pace in the powerplay.

Haseebullah replaced regular white-ball captain Mohammad Rizwan and Salman Ali Agha took over as Pakistan's fourth T20 skipper in 2024. Left-arm fast bowler Jahandad Khan was preferred to Naseem Shah.

Australia celebrates wicket of Pakistan's Naseem Shah during the T20 international cricket match in Sydney
PHOTO: PTI

Leg-spinner Adam Zampa (2-11) ignited Pakistan's slide when he had Haseebullah caught at short fine leg. He then clean bowled Babar with a sharp googly.

Pakistan won the preceding ODI series 2-1 but its struggle in T20s continued. It was knocked out in the group stage of the World Cup in June. *—PTI*

ENGLAND WINS T20 SERIES 3-1 AGAINST WI

GROS ISLET/ PALLEKELE,18 NOV

England sealed a 3-1 win in its Twenty20 series against West Indies when the fifth and final match was abandoned after five overs because of rain.

West Indies reached 44-0 at the end of the fifth over after losing the toss when torrential rain began to fall. Evin Lewis was 29 not out and Shai Hope on 14.

With no hope of the rain abating and the outfield already soaked, the umpires made the decision to call off play about 6:15 p.m. local time with no result.

England won the first three matches of the series by eight wickets, seven wickets and three wickets respectively. West Indies won the fourth match on Saturday by five wickets in a record run chase.

Sri Lanka beats New Zealand in 2nd ODI to win another home series

Kusal Mendis hit a patient 74 not out as Sri Lanka beat New Zealand by three wickets under the DLS method with six balls remaining in the rain-hit second ODI.

Sri Lanka took an unassailable 2-0 lead in the three-match series with the final game also at Pallekele on Tuesday. Sri Lanka won the first one-day international by 45 runs — also by DLS — after rain disrupted that game at Dambulla.

It was Sri Lanka's fifth ODI series win at home in 2024 after it had beaten Zimbabwe, Afghanistan, India and West Indies. *—PTI*

ASIAN CHAMPIONS TROPHY

India players celebrate after scoring a goal during the Women's Asian Champions Trophy 2024 hockey match against China
PHOTO: PTI

India looks to leverage strength against Japan

RAJGIR, 18 NOV

A confident and unbeaten India will back their strategy of attack and defense at appropriate times when they take on Japan in the semifinal of the women's Asian Champions Trophy hockey tournament om Tuesday.

Hosts and defending champions India will undoubtedly enter the semifinal as clear favourites against a side which they trounced 3-0 in their final league game.

World number nine India have registered five wins from as many games, including 3-0 victory over Olympic silver medallist and world number six China.

India's chief coach Harendra Singh also emphasised on the need to continue in the same vein in the tournament.

The Indians must guard against complacency, as a single mistake could shatter their dreams of retaining the crown.

The Indians might have defeated Japan hands down in the league stage, but Harendra is in no mood to take their opponents lightly in knock-out match.

One of the most encouraging aspects of India's success here has been the stellar performance of their backline, led brilliantly by Udita, Sushila Chanu, and Vaishnavi Vitthal Phalke. Indian defense has been so solid that goalkeepers Savita Punia and Bichu Devi Karibam have been tested in the tournament. *—PTI*

> **I just tell the girls that you are in Buddha's land so just be Buddha once inside the circle and don't try to be flying horse**
>
> —Harendra Singh, India's Chief coach

China Masters: Satwik, Chirag return to action

SHENZHEN, 18 NOV

India's premier men's doubles pair of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty will make a highly-anticipated return to action at the China Masters Super 750 badminton tournament, starting here on Tuesday, following a disappointing Paris Olympics campaign.

The former world number one duo had been sidelined from competitive action post the Paris Olympics due to Satwik's shoulder injury.

Their absence from the circuit led them to miss several high-profile tournaments, including the Arctic Open, Denmark Open, and China Open.

Fresh off a lengthy recovery, Satwik and his Asian Games gold medal-winning partner Chirag will aim to regain their momentum, despite having been without a coach since Mathias Boe's departure in August.

Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty
PHOTO: PTI

Satwik and Chirag, who finished runner-up in the last editions, will start their campaign against Chinese Taipei's Yang Po-Hsuan and Lee Jhe-Huei in the opening round. *—PTI*

IOA JOINS AS INDIA HOSTS 1ST KHO KHO WC IN JAN

NEW DELHI, 18 NOV

Indian Olympic Association (IOA) on Monday confirmed its partnership with the Kho Kho Federation of India as the country gets to ready to host the first-ever Kho Kho World Cup, to be held here from 13-19 January.

The IOA has pledged its "unwavering support" for the event to be organised at the at the IGI Stadium.

In a statement to KKFI chief Sudhanshu Mittal, IOA president PT Usha expressed the association's strong commitment to elevating indigenous sports like Kho Kho.

Usha said, "We recognise the significance of this event in celebrating our cultural heritage and promoting traditional sports, and we look forward to collaborating with Kho Kho Federation of India to ensure the success of the tournament. *—PTI*

DELHI HC STAYS ORDER IN GAMBHIR'S CHEATING CASE

NEW DELHI, 18 NOV

Delhi High Court on Monday stayed an order which had set aside the discharge of former cricketer and current head coach of the Indian cricket team Gautam Gambhir and others in a case in which home buyers were reportedly cheated.

Justice Manoj Kumar Ohri passed the interim order and sought the response of the Delhi government on a plea by Gambhir challenging the sessions court verdict which had set aside a magisterial court order discharging him in the case.

Gautam Gambhir
PHOTO: UCCRICKET

The High Court said a detailed order would be passed later on.

In its 29 October order, the sessions court said the magisterial court's decision reflected "inadequate expression of mind" in deciding the allegations against Gambhir. *—PTI*

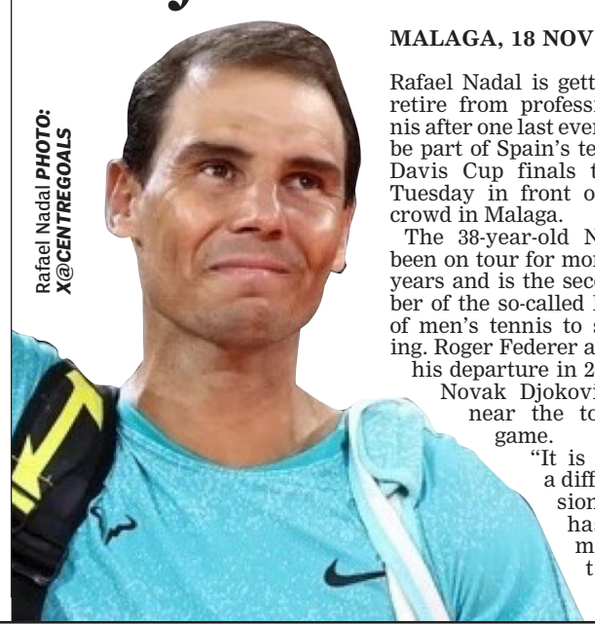
India names team for men's Junior Asia Cup

NEW DELHI, 18 NOV

Defender Amir Ali will lead a 20-member Indian squad in the men's Junior Asia Cup hockey tournament starting in Muscat from 26 November. India have won this tournament for a record four times, including 2004, 2008, 2015 and 2023. They beat nemesis Pakistan 2-1 in the final last year to lift the title. This year, the event will have 10 teams from the continent divided into two pools with India, Chinese Taipei, Japan, Korea and Thailand clubbed in pool A. Bangladesh, Malaysia, China, Oman and Pakistan are in Pool B. The tournament is also a qualifying event for next year's FIH Junior World Cup and India have automatically qualified for it by virtue of being hosts. *—PTI*

BIDDING FAREWELL

Rafael Nadal to retire after Davis Cup



Rafael Nadal PHOTO: X@CENTREGOALS

MALAGA, 18 NOV

Rafael Nadal is getting set to retire from professional tennis after one last event: He will be part of Spain's team at the Davis Cup finals that start Tuesday in front of a home crowd in Malaga.

The 38-year-old Nadal has been on tour for more than 20 years and is the second member of the so-called Big Three of men's tennis to stop playing. Roger Federer announced his departure in 2022, while Novak Djokovic is still near the top of the game.

"It is obviously a difficult decision, one that has taken me some time to make. But in this life, everything has a beginning and an end," said Nadal, who has been practicing daily in Malaga since last week. "And I think it is the appropriate time to put an end to a career that has been long and much more successful than I could have ever imagined."

Why is Nadal retiring now?

The biggest reason he is ready to move on is that he has been bothered by a series of injuries, including a painful foot, abdominal muscle problems and a hip issue that required surgery last season.

How many grand slam titles did Nadal win?

Nadal finishes with 22 Grand Slam singles titles, behind only Djokovic's 24 among men in the history of tennis, and ahead of Federer's 20. The breakdown: 14 at the French Open, four at the U.S. Open, two at Wimbledon, two at the Australian Open. Nadal's last major championship came in Paris in 2022, when he needed nerve-numbing injections in his left foot. PTI

Neither Nadal nor Spanish captain David Ferrer would say Monday whether the 22-time Grand Slam champion will play singles or doubles — or even at all — at the Davis Cup Final 8, his last event before retirement.

Spain is scheduled to face the Netherlands on Tuesday in the quarterfinals on an indoor hard court at the Palacio de Deportes Jose Maria Martin Carpena. The winner will play in the semifinals on Friday. The championship will be decided on Sunday. *—PTI*

Sinner addresses doping case after ATP finals victory

TURIN, 18 NOV

PHOTO: PTI

Sleepless nights. Constant thoughts of what went wrong — and how it could have been prevented.

Jannik Sinner opened up about his ongoing doping case after beating U.S. Open runner-up Taylor Fritz 6-4, 6-4 on Sunday for the ATP Finals trophy before his home fans.

Sinner tested positive in two separate drug tests in March and a decision to clear him of wrongdoing was appealed by the World Anti-Doping Agency in September. A final ruling is expected from the Court of Arbitration for Sport early next year.

Sinner's explanation was that the banned performance-enhancer entered his system unintentionally through a massage from his physiotherapist, who had used a spray containing the steroid to treat his own cut finger.

Sinner has won 26 of his last 27 matches and ends the ATP season with eight titles and an overall record of 70-6.

Davis cup and Nadal's retirement are next

Both Sinner and Fritz will conclude their seasons representing defending champion Italy and the United States, respectively, in the Davis Cup finals, which start Tuesday in Spain, and which will also mark Nadal's retirement. *—PTI*